

**First Baptist Church Merritt Island**  
**Senior Pastor Titus Green**  
**November 2, 2025**  
**IN THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER**  
**Jesus is Praying for Us**  
**John 17**

***[Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.]***

In his book, *The Jordan River Rules*, Robert Morgan tells a story some of you may identify with. Years ago, he checked into a hotel and wanted to get a drink. So, he walked down the hall to a vending machine, put in his change and pressed the button, but nothing happened. He pounded on the machine a little bit, but that didn't help at all. So, he found another vending machine, put in some more change, and pressed the button – same result. Both machines had done the same thing. So, he decided to move along. Finally, he came across another vending machine. With that last bit of hope and his last remaining quarters, he put in the change and reached out and pressed the button. Nothing.

That's when he had an "aha moment." That floor of the hotel was just one, big circle. He'd been walking around in circles, putting his money in the same old machine. No matter how many times he tried he was always going to get the same result.

He learned the lesson that a wise man once shared with me – if nothing changes, nothing changes. And that's been a driving force behind this series on prayer. In my experience, far too many people feel like Robert Morgan circling around that hotel. Their prayer lives feel broken or unproductive or disappointing. They want to experience something they aren't experiencing. To quote Don Whitney, they find themselves "saying the same old things about the same old things." And if nothing changes, nothing changes.

So, for the last 4 weeks we have been studying prayer in the life of Jesus. My hope is that the Spirit of God will provide us with some "aha moments", showing us ways we can begin to pray more and more like Jesus intended.

And there's no better way to know how Jesus intends us to pray than examining how Jesus Himself prays.

And that brings us to our last passage of study in this series. This morning, we are going to look at the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. This passage is often called the "Highly Priestly Prayer" because Jesus is our Great High Priest who is just hours away from offering Himself as a sacrifice for our sin. And before He goes to the cross, He offers this amazing prayer.

This morning, I will only be able to give you an overview of what Jesus prays. We will come back to John 17 next week and even then, we won't come close to covering everything we find in this prayer. For today, there are two main observations I want to point out from John 17.

#### 1. Jesus' Pattern of Prayer

Throughout this series, we've been referring back to the pattern of prayer Jesus gave us at the beginning of His ministry in the Lord's prayer. I shared with you something I learned from a pastor named Daniel Henderson. He points out that the pattern of the Lord's prayer is Upward, Downward, Inward, and Outward.

- Prayer looks upward in reverence to who God is - wanting His name to be hallowed or glorified. Worship and praise and thanksgiving happen in prayer.
- Prayer moves downward in response to God – trusting Him, aligning our lives with His Kingdom agenda and submitting to His will.
- Prayer moves inward to request that God supply our needs according to His will. We ask Him to strengthen us with daily bread for the resources we need to live for His glory and for the things we need to live in loving relationships with others.
- Prayer moves outward by asking God for readiness as we face the spiritual battle that awaits us each day. This how we lean into God for the grace and strength to avoid the traps of temptation and sin as we go about our lives.

That's the pattern of prayer Jesus gives us. And every part of that pattern is found here in John 17.

## 2. Jesus' Priorities in Prayer

Prayer reveals our priorities. We pray about the things we most want God to do. And that's true about Jesus. His prayer reveals His priorities. It displays His desires for us. In that way, John 17 becomes a powerful help to our prayer lives. As we look through this prayer, the question should be: Do I desire for my life what Jesus desires for my life? Am I asking God the Father to do what Jesus asks the Father to do?

James 4 says that the primary reasons we don't experience God's powerful answer to our prayers is because we don't ask Him for good things or, when we do ask, we ask with the wrong motives.

So, if you want to experience the vibrant power of God in your prayer, adopt the priorities of Jesus. And where you honestly don't desire what Jesus desires, yield your heart to Him. Ask Him to change your heart.

With that in mind, let's turn our attention to John 17. And let me start by giving you the big idea for this morning so you can look for the priorities of Jesus while we read this text.

**BIG IDEA: AS JESUS PRAYS FOR HIS PEOPLE, HE PRIORITIZES GOD'S GLORY AND OUR SANCTITY, UNITY, AND SECURITY.**

### *John 17*

*When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. 6 "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming 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 ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."***

I hope you can see each part of our big idea. But let's walk through each part of the big idea and I'll show you where I'm getting it.

### JESUS IS PRAYING FOR HIS PEOPLE

***John 17:9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.***

***John 17:20 I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,***

Jesus is praying for His disciples. But not just the original 11. He also prays for everyone who will come to believe in Jesus through the word they would spread about Him throughout the world. Are you trusting in Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Then Jesus is praying for you!

Let that sink in for a second. Before Jesus went to the cross to suffer and die in your place, He stopped to pray. And He prayed for you. Jesus prays for you. And that's not unique to just this prayer.

***Romans 8:31–34***

***What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.***

There is literally nothing I could tell you today that should be more encouraging to your soul than this. God is for you. He's so for you that He gave up His only Son to suffer and die in your place so you could be forgiven of your sin and restored to Him. And if He is willing to give you His only Son, what good thing would He withhold from you? But, as though that isn't enough, right now, this very moment, Jesus Christ is standing at the right hand of God the Father and is interceding for us. He's asking the Father to work in our lives for good and glorious purposes.

I don't know what's going on in your life. But, if you're living on planet earth (and most of you are), you're going through something. And, if you are trusting in Jesus, Jesus is praying for you. And He isn't praying alone.

*Romans 8:26*

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.*

There is a prayer meeting among the Godhead. The Spirit and the Son are praying to the Father for each and every follower of Jesus, including you.

Be encouraged. Rejoice. Rest. The prayers of Jesus will be fulfilled for you. The prayers of the Spirit will be fulfilled for you. The good purposes of God will be fulfilled for you.

And as Jesus prays for us, what are His priorities? 5 priorities...

### PRIORITY #1 - JESUS PRIORITIZES HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FATHER

***1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father..."***

Six times in this prayer (verses 1, 5, 11, 21, 24, 25), Jesus uses the word "Father." He's praying from a place of relationship and intimacy. He is the perfect Son talking to the perfect Father. Remember the story I told at the beginning of this message about the guy and the vending machine? One of the reasons that reminded me so much about our prayer lives is because many people treat God like nothing more than a cosmic vending machine. He's our Heavenly Amazon account and prayer is the Buy It Now button. That's one of the biggest things that needs to change in our approach to prayer. That's not how Jesus prays. He prays from a place of intimacy and relationship.

Is your primary priority in prayer to get things FROM God or to get to KNOW God and experience His presence?

### PRIORITY #2 - JESUS PRIORITIZES GOD'S GLORY

***John 17:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you***

***John 17:4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.***

The very first thing Jesus asks is for God to be glorified. And Jesus includes Himself in that request because Jesus is God in the flesh. Listen, the primary reason that all things exist is for the glory of God. And there are people who think that makes God a narcissist or an ego-maniac. But it isn't wrong for God to seek His own glory since He is God. If God attempted to glorify something that isn't God, that would make Him guilty of worshiping a false God.

So, Jesus prays for the glory of God. And notice two things He says are grounds for God to be glorified.

Verse 2 says He should be glorified because He has authority over all flesh. That word authority means the right and power to rule. Jesus has the right and power to rule over all people. That's means He is the King. And since His is the eternal God, He is an eternal King who is ruling over an

eternal Kingdom. That's the whole reason Jesus came to this world – to make a way for people to live forever as part of His eternal kingdom. And that's why verses 2 and 3 say He has given eternal life to all the people who have come to know Him.

So, Jesus is praying for God to be glorified through the coming of His eternal Kingdom on the earth. (Your Kingdom Come)

The second reason Jesus says He should be glorified is because He accomplished the Father's will. **verse 4: *I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.*** (Your will be done) He did what the Father sent Him to do. And what was that work? To give eternal life to people.

Jesus prioritizes the Glory of God, so he prays...

- That God's glory would be seen in the display of Christ's power and authority.
- That God's glory would be seen in the accomplishment of God's will.
- That God's glory would be seen in the salvation of God's people – that people would come to know and love Jesus as their Savior and One, True King.

Now, think about how you consistently pray about the things in your life. Is your priority the glory of God? Are you asking Him to display Christ's resurrection power and kingdom authority – not according to your will but according to His will? Are you praising God for your salvation and praying for others to be saved?

### PRIORITY #3 - JESUS PRIORITIZES OUR SANCTITY

#### ***17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.***

The word "sanctify" is related to the word "holy." It means to be set apart from something for something.

Primarily, it means to be set apart from this world for the purposes of God. In the Bible, it's used to describe everything from the instruments that were used for worshiping God at the temple to the people who led the worship of God at the Temple.

Our deepest need as people is to be realigned with the purposes of God for our lives. We need the power of God to make us more and more like Jesus. In other words, we need to be sanctified. Set apart from the ways of this broken world for the purpose God has for our lives. Jesus says that happens as the truth of God's word takes root in us in a way that transforms us by the power of Christ's Spirit.

Remember that Romans 8 says that the Spirit is interceding for us and that Jesus is praying or interceding for us. Do you know the verses that come right in between those two things? *Romans 8:28 – God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purposes.* Verse 29 tells us exactly what that good purpose it – *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,*

The good that God is causing all things to work together for is that we would be made more and more like Jesus. And that's what the Spirit and the Son are interceding for on our behalf. And that's what Jesus prioritizes in this prayer.

So, think about the things you are praying for in your life. What would change about how you pray if you prioritized being sanctified? What would change if you didn't just ask God to do what you desire but you prayed that God would make you more like Jesus so that you would do what He desires? (Your will be done) What if you began to pray for this as the primary request for the people in your life?

Jesus prioritizes our sanctification, so He makes that His prayer.

#### PRIORITY #4 - JESUS PRIORITIZES OUR UNITY

**20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.**

Jesus prays that His people would live in unity with one another. He prays that we would live in and through His love as a testimony to this world. That's just another way of saying that we wouldn't be divided by sin and selfishness. In other words, (from the Lord's Prayer) that we would love and forgive each other as we have been loved and forgiven by God.

Are you praying for God's love and grace to flow in you and through you to the people around you? Where are the broken places in your relationship to others that need a work of God? Are you bringing those places to Him in prayer?

#### PRIORITY #5 - JESUS PRIORITIZES OUR SECURITY

**11 Holy Father, keep them in your name...**

The word "keep" means to guard something and keep it secure. Jesus prays that we would be guarded by the power of God. And in verse 15, He clarifies what He means by that.

**15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.**

That's almost a direct quote from the Lord's Prayer. Jesus knows we will face trials and battles in this world. And He prays that we would be kept secure and safe from the attacks of the enemy by the power of God.

And there's something that might really startle us. He doesn't pray that we would be taken out of the place of trial. He prays that we would be secured by God's power in the midst of trial. That's one of the ways this world sees how powerful Jesus is in the life of His people. When Jesus gives us joy and peace and love in the midst of the trials of life, it proves that He is greater and stronger and more glorious than anything else in this world.

So, what if you didn't just pray for God's power to bring your trials to an end (not that it's wrong to pray that). What if you asked the Lord to fill you with the life of Jesus in the midst of trials so that you would overcome every attack of the enemy?

Okay, there are 5 priorities of Jesus in prayer. Next Sunday, we will come back to John 17 and spend some extended time in prayer as a church family. And, to prepare our hearts for that, I want to ask you to take John 17 this week and pray from those priorities of Jesus.

And a simple way to do that is to use the pattern of Jesus.

- Upward in Reverence to Who God is in Worship and Praise
  - Our Father who is worthy of Glory
  - Our King who has all authority and uses His power to save sinners like us
- Downward in Response
  - Ask that His kingdom would grow and expand in your life as you yield to His will
  - Ask that people around you would come to have eternal life by trusting in Jesus
- Inward with Request
  - Ask the Father to fill you with Daily Bread – the Bread of His word and the power of Jesus who is the Bread of Life
    - So that you would be sanctified
    - So that you would be unified with other believers
- Outward in Readiness
  - Ask the Father to give you strength to overcome the spiritual battle you are in and for the victorious, resurrection power of Jesus to be on display in you.