

“The High Priestly Prayer Of Christ (Part I) John 17:1-19

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Teaching Aim: To examine the High Priestly prayer of Jesus Christ on the night before His crucifixion. To recognize that Jesus prayed in three specific areas: 1) for Himself (**vv. 1-5**); for His disciples (**vv. 6-19**); and for those who would believe in the future; this includes believers today (**vv. 20-26**). To understand the priority that Jesus placed on prayer in His own life should be an inspiration to every Christ-follower today.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: Jesus realized the hour for His crucifixion had come (John 17:1-5)

1. Jesus had been preparing His disciples in **John chapter 16** for the persecution that would come following His crucifixion. He finished with the following words in **John 16:33**: *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* What did Jesus do once He had spoken these words according to **John 17:1**? What hour was Jesus referring to? What did He ask the Father to do in **verse 1b**? What Jesus teach His disciples to expect in the world?

2. Jesus used the word *“Father”* 6x in this prayer and 122x in the Gospel of John. The unity between the Father and the Son is a common theme throughout the Gospel of John. What did the Father give to His Son according to **verse 2**?

3. Jesus favorite title for Himself was *“the Son of Man.”* He used this title 82 or 83x. How does **verse 2** relate to this title and to Daniel’s vision in **Dan. 7:13-14**? How vast was the authority that the Father gave to Jesus in **verse 2b**? How does the teaching of **verse 2** relate to **Acts 13:47-48**?

4. The Greek word for *“know”* is used elsewhere in Scripture to speak of sexual intimacy, but that’s not how Jesus used it here (**vs. 3**). What did Jesus mean when He prayed, *“that they (His disciples) may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”* How intimately do you know the Lord? According to Jesus in **verse 3**, what is eternal life? How does one get this eternal life? (See **John 3:3,5, 16; 14:6; Acts 4:12**)

5. What are some ways that Jesus Christ glorified the Father through His public ministry on earth (**vs. 4**)? What work was Jesus referring to in **verse 4**? William MacDonald wrote, *“As the Lord uttered these words, He was speaking as if He had already died, been buried, and risen again. He had glorified the Father by His sinless life, by His miracles, by His suffering and death, and by His resurrection.”* Could anything stop Jesus from going to the cross?

6. **Verse 5** points to the eternality of Jesus Christ. Usually when Jesus refers to the world, He is referring to fallen humanity, but in this particular case, He is referring to planet earth. What can we learn about Jesus from **John 1:1-3, 14** and **Col. 1:15-17**) The Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ is a created being and not God. According to **John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; and Heb. 1:10-12**, is this claim true or false?

Part II: Jesus prayed for the unity of His disciples (John 17:6-12)

1. What did Jesus mean when He said, I have manifested Your Name (**vs. 6**)? Names mean a lot in the Bible, what can we learn about God the Father from His names? Believers are a love gift from the Father to the Son. Does the Son reciprocate this love gift back to the Father in **1 Cor. 15:27-28**? If so, how?

2. The coming of Christ was Trinitarian in nature: the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world; the Son redeemed His people from their sin; and the Holy Spirit applies salvation to believer’s everyday lives. What does this mean for you personally?

3. In **verse 8** we once again see that Jesus spoke what the Father told Him to speak. What do we find Jesus doing for those who believe in Him (**vs. 8**)? What startling revelation did Jesus make in **verse 9**? Does this surprise you? Why? It is important to note that there were times when Jesus did pray for unbelievers. (See **Luke 23:33-34**) Note: it is comforting to know that Jesus continues His work of intercession for us today in heaven. (See **Rom 8:34; Heb. 7:24-25**)

4. In **verse 10** we see the perfect unity between the Father and the Son along with the body of Christ, the Church. Today we are included in that very special union by grace through faith in Christ. Have you ever wondered why you are on planet earth? The Westminster Shorter Catechism question 1 reads, "*What is the chief end of man?*" What is the answer to this question? (Hint: Search online.) How does this answer relate to **verse 10**?

5. At the moment of Jesus prayer, the crucifixion is so sure to happen that Jesus speaks as if it already had. How does Jesus address the Father in **verse 11**? Is this unusual? If so, how? Who does Jesus ask the Father to protect? Why?

6. What did Jesus do for His disciples while He was in on earth (**vs. 12**)? Why was this especially important for the disciples of Jesus? (See **1 Pet. 5:8**) Has the enemy ever attacked you when you took a step forward spiritually? Did you keep pressing on or quit?

7. Who is the only disciple that Jesus did not keep (**vs. 12**)? Why? Was Judas ever saved, or did he just pretend to be? (See **Psa. 41:9**) What can we learn about the eternal security of the born-again believer in **John 10:27-30**? Jesus called Judas "*the son of perdition*" in **verse 12**. What other major character in the Bible is also called by this title? (See **2 Thess. 2:3**) What does this teach us about the character of Judas?

Part III: Jesus asked the Father to sanctify believers by His truth, reminding them that God's Word is truth (John 17:13-19)

1. What central theme within the ministry of Jesus is found in **verse 13**? (See **John 15:11; 16:23-24**) How has coming to faith in Christ brought joy into your life? Are Christians in a win/win situation as they go through the challenges of life? Is this truth a comfort to you?

2. Regeneration radically changes us; Satan hates the thought of someone being saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. According to **verse 14**, how will the world system respond to those who come to faith in Christ? Does this surprise you? What are some ways that your life has changed since coming to Christ? (See **Eph. 2:1-5; 2 Cor. 5:17**)

3. It was the prayer of Jesus that His disciples would be delivered from the evil one. What should the Lord's prayer really be called? What did Jesus teach His disciples in this prayer? (See **Matt. 6:8-13**)

4. How did Jesus specifically pray for His disciples in **verse 15**? Note: It is important for Christians not to take themselves out of the world, but rather to remain in meaningful contact with it. Why? Why is it important to take the gospel message outside of the four walls of the church? What are some ways that you are personally doing this? What kind of outside organizations are you involved with as you try to reach the world for Christ?

5. What did Jesus mean when He said in **verse 16**, "*They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world?*" When Jesus speaks of "*the world*," He is most often speaking of the evil world system that is under the direction of the god of this age, Satan. Why is it important for Christians to be especially careful when involved in organizations that don't adhere to the same Judeo-Christian values that we do?

6. What does the word "*sanctification*" mean? When does the sanctification process begin and when does it end? What is "*truth*" according to Jesus? R.C. Sproul wrote, "*Our sanctification comes from the Word of God and from the truth that is poured into our souls, truth that renews our minds, renews our thinking, and renews our lives.*" What do we learn from **Rom. 12:1-2** about renewing our minds? Have you experienced this in your own life?

7. Jesus Christ is the ultimate Apostle (one who is sent). (See **Heb. 3:1-2a**) What do we learn about the disciples of Christ in **verse 18**? Note: We may long for heaven, but it's on earth where the work needs to be done. If there is one thing that we can't do in heaven, it is to evangelize those who are on earth. What are you doing about it?

8. In what way does Jesus sanctify Himself (**vs. 19**)? Jesus set Himself apart to fulfill His Father's will and that would include dying on the cross in just a matter of hours. According to **verse 19b**, what was the purpose behind this sanctification? Note: Christ's death on the cross would sanctify us for the work that God has called us to do on earth. It is the blood of Christ that makes us holy and sets us apart for service to God.

9. If we want to be used effectively by God on earth, we need to spend quality time with God in His Word (the Bible). Spending time in God's Word sanctifies us in His truth. D.L. Moody said, *"This book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book."* What did Moody mean? How has spending time in God's Word changed your life?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- It is the Father who has given Jesus authority over all people that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. (See **John 17:1-2**)
- Jesus prayed, *"...this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."* (See **John 17:3**)
- Jesus prayed that the Father, following the crucifixion, would restore to Him the glory that they shared together before the incarnation.
- Jesus did not pray for the lost in **John chapter 17**; He prayed for those whom the Father had given Him.
- Jesus prayed that the church would be one in unity, just as He and the Father are one.
- Jesus lost none of His disciples except for Judas who never was a true believer.
- Jesus prayed that His disciples would be sanctified (meaning set apart) in God's truth; God's Word is truth.