

Our 40 Day Journey to the Cross

April 7 - April 12

Day 32-34

Thursday, Friday and Saturday

The prayers of Jesus

In John 17, known as the High Priestly Prayer, Jesus speaks to God about three main topics. First is Christ Himself, asking God the Father to glorify Him so He can glorify the Father.

Next, Jesus prays for the faith and courage in His closest disciples. Finally, He prays for those who will come to faith because of the apostles' writing and teaching. This moment occurs before Jesus enters Gethsemane, where the other Gospels will record His final anguished prayers before being arrested (Matthew 26:36–46; Mark 14:32–42; Luke 22:39–46).

Jesus is praying for Himself in these early verses of the High Priestly Prayer. However, His focus is on obeying the will of God.

“The hour Has Come....Glorify Your Son”

After explaining more about the coming of the Holy Spirit and looming persecution (John 16:4–15), Jesus now begins to pray.

It is the cross (see John 12:27-33, 13:30-33, 21:18-19) that will glorify the Son. The cross is utter humiliation to the world, but an instrument of glorification in God's eyes. Are we willing to embrace the glory of God, even if the world sees it as humiliation?

Jesus now prays in recognition that the time has arrived. Scripture indicates that man's primary purpose is to glorify God (Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31). Part of glorifying God is obedience to His will, and perseverance in difficult circumstances.

What Jesus is about to experience will give glory to God, in that usual sense, by demonstrating humility and submission. It will also bring immense glory to God as the pivot point of salvation by grace through faith.

Jesus Prays for Himself John 17:1-5

- 1** Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,
- 2** as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.
- 3** And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
- 4** I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.
- 5** And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

- 6** “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.
- 7** Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.
- 8** For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.
- 9** “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.
- 10** And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

13 But now I come 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 pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Jesus Prays for All Believers

20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; **21** that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. **22** And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: **23** I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made

perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

The Prayer in the Garden Matthew 26:36-46

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.”

37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.

38 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”

40 Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

43 And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.

44 So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

The Prayer in the Garden Mark 14:32-42

32 Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, “Sit here while I pray.”

33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed.

34 Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.”

35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him.

36 And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?”

38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words.

40 And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him.

41 Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.”

The Prayer in the Garden

Luke 22:39-46

39 Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.

40 When He came to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

42 saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.”

43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.

46 Then He said to them, “Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”

Jesus Prays While Hanging On the Cross

Luke 23:34

"Father forgive them; for they know not what they do"

Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34

"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In the midst of the most shocking miscarriage of justice when hatred against God and His Christ reach the height of evil, we have a glimpse into the Father-heart of God and the infinite passion and love of the Son with these eternal words: *“Father forgive them, they know not what they do.”*

Despised, rejected and dying on the cross, with outstretched arms of love, to redeem mankind from their sins. The first thought on the mind of our Saviour was not hatred, revenge or self-pity but eternal forgiveness. He demonstrated a depth of forgiving love that passes our understanding.

There was no resentment or anger, no bitterness, no feelings of hostility or damaged pride, but God showed a depth of divine forgiveness that was able to lovingly embrace the crude Roman soldiers that greedily envied His bloodied garment and cast lots for his seamless cloak.

It included the governor and his cowardly compromise. It encompassed the false witnesses with their fabricated allegations and false testimony. It embraced the Jewish nation who screamed, His blood be on us and on our children – together with the scheming Jewish leaders and Caiaphas – the high priest who unwittingly prophesied: it is expedient for us, that one Man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

Never were words more pregnant with meaning or more power than this utterance from Israel's chief Priest. Oh yes, Christ's heart of forgiveness not only embraced all who were present and participated in this historic injustice, but His gracious forgiveness stretched right back to the first fallen couple, who disobeyed God by eating of the tree of knowledge, and reached forward into the far-distant future – for His gracious forgiveness includes you and I. His infinite forgiveness touches the lives of all who are born of a woman – all who are of the seed of Adam's fallen race.

But this was no tragic accident. This did not catch God out by surprise. Forgiveness was on the heart of the Father Who planned for the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus from before time began, before space was created – before the worlds were made.

The love that flooded from the heart of the Father and blood that streamed from the body of the Saviour was a demonstration of divine forgiveness and love divine – so that all who believe on His name are forever forgiven.

Jesus' Ministry Was Born in Prayer.

Luke 3:21-22

“Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased.”

Jesus Faced Temptation with Prayer

In Luke 4:1-2 we see that while he was in the desert for forty days, being tempted by the devil he ate nothing during those days. Jesus was praying and fasting as he victoriously battled and withstood the devil himself. Jesus teaches us by example that there is no better foundation to build on than prayer! Prayer was not only the starting base for the ministry of Jesus, but also what continued to sustain and connect him to his heavenly Father as he demonstrated his power through his Son.

A Life of Prayer

Jesus Christ was all about prayer, from the beginning of his ministry, when He ministered to the disciples, and even at the end of His ministry where He prayed and interceded in prayer for the disciples.

Jesus warned, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your

brothers” (Luke 22:31-32). Imagine looking into the eyes of Jesus, as He says that He is praying for you? Paul writes, “...He who is at the right hand of God, intercedes for us...” (Romans 8:34). Again, from the beginning to the end of his ministry Jesus prayed. Even at the cross He took his last breath in prayer (Luke 23:46): “...Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. Having said this, He breathed His last breath”