



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Priorities of the Prayer of Jesus

Date: March 1, 2026

Scripture Text: John 17:9-26

Notes:

After spending time with His disciples the night before His crucifixion, Jesus turns His attention to His heavenly Father. We find Him alone in prayer. John 17 is what some call the ‘real Lord’s Prayer’. It is Jesus spending an intimate time with His Father, praying on behalf of Himself, His disciples, and for those who would one day accept His redemptive work (us!). His prayer concerns what happens after His crucifixion and resurrection, for the spread of His gospel message and for the increase of the kingdom of heaven. Let’s take a look at *the priorities of the prayer of Jesus*.

I. Protection of the Saints ([John 17:9-16](#))

In the prior verses Jesus acknowledges to His heavenly Father that He taught His disciples what He had given Him to say. As He is getting ready to leave them, Jesus now prays on their behalf for God’s protection of them. Because of the words Jesus has taught them, the world would hate them.

- Jesus prayed for their protection from two threats. The first was themselves ([vss. 11-12](#)). Our fleshly desires are at conflict with the will of the Spirit ([Gal. 5:16-17](#)).
 - What are examples from the Bible when people chose their way instead of God’s way. What was the outcome of each example?
 - When was a time when you chose your way over God’s way? What was the outcome?
 - How can we get better at choosing God’s way over our way?
- Jesus also prayed for protection from Satan. Jesus had encountered Satan and his attempts to make Him sin. He knew Satan would be no less intentional with His disciples.
 - Jesus gave them the Spirit and scripture ([vss. 13-14](#)) to equip them against Satan. Are those same two resources still available today?
 - How did Jesus use scripture against Satan?
 - Describe practical examples how we can use the Spirit & scripture to guard against Satan’s attacks.

II. Sanctification of the Saints ([John 17:17-19](#))

Sanctify means ‘to set apart for God’s use’. “This involves their [the disciples] consecration for the task now entrusted to them; it involves further their inward purification and endowment with all the spiritual resources necessary for carrying out that task. This purification and endowment are the work of the Spirit, but here Jesus declares the instrument of that work to be ‘the truth’—the truth embodied in the Father’s ‘word’



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which Jesus had given to the disciples as He Himself had received it from the Father ([vv. 8, 14](#)). The very message which they are to proclaim in His name will exercise its sanctifying effect on them: that message is the continuation of His message, just as their mission in the world is the extension of His mission” (Bruce, p. 334).

- What was the purpose Jesus was set apart for (sanctified)?
- How is that similar to the disciples? Us?
- An element of sanctification is purity towards the truth of God’s word. How can we practice spiritual purity by not allowing our flesh or cultural influences corrupt the truth of God’s word in our heart?
- How would you describe God’s purpose for you?

III. Unity of the Saints ([John 17:20-23](#))

Jesus describes the perfect unity between Himself and His heavenly Father and expresses His desire for those “who believe in Me though their [the Apostles] word” to have the same unity. These are all those who believe in Christ through the teachings of the Apostles. That includes us!!

- Jesus states that by the unity of the church, the world will know Jesus, and the love of the Father. Describe what Jesus wants of His church.
- It doesn’t mean we will always agree, but Jesus expects His church to be unified around Him. What does that look like practically?
- What steps can you take to encourage unity within the church?

IV. Security of the Saints ([John 17:24](#))

Jesus’ desire was for those who believed in Him to be with Him ([Eph. 2:8-9](#)). He had told His disciples back in chapter 14 that He was going to prepare a place for them (and us).

- How can knowing we will be with Jesus one day motivate us to do His work until then?
- How would you describe to a lost person what it takes to be with Jesus?

V. Love of the Saints ([John 17:25-26](#))

“Jesus said that the purpose of the revelation of the Father to his disciples was *in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them*. When Jesus reveals the Father to those who accept him as Messiah, he introduces them at the same time to the love of the Father. One of the things Jesus taught his disciples in the Last Supper discourse was that the Father himself loved them, and therefore they could bring their prayers directly to him ([16:26–27](#)). Also, he taught them that he himself would dwell with/in those who accepted his teaching and obeyed him ([14:23](#)). The ongoing presence of Jesus among his people (*I myself may be in [among] them*) is the unique feature of the Christian community.” (Kruse)