

Gospel of John Chapter 17A  
Prayer

*"Talking to men for God is a great thing, but talking to God for men is greater still."*  
E.M. Bounds

*"I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach."* Charles Spurgeon

Spurgeon's "boiler-room." (1860's) Five young college students were spending a Sunday in London, so they went to hear C.H. Spurgeon preach. While waiting for the doors to open, the students were greeted by a man who asked, "Gentlemen, let me show you around. Would you like to see the heating plant of this church?" They were not particularly interested, for it was a hot day in July. But they didn't want to offend the stranger, so they consented. The young men were taken down a stairway, a door was quietly opened, and their guide whispered, "This is our heating plant." Surprised, the students saw 700 people bowed in prayer, seeking God's blessing on the service that was soon to begin. Softly closing the door, the gentleman then introduced himself. It was none other than Charles Spurgeon

Our study of the Gospel of John this morning will focus on the subject of PRAYER. Here is what I hope to communicate from the text this morning:

1. Petitioning God in a new way
2. Promised Response is on the way
3. Paradigm of Prayer from the one who is the way

Petitioning God in a New Way

IN John 16:23-28 Jesus begins to explain the important place PRAYER will have in the life of his disciples following his departure.

- Please take notice that Jesus uses 2 different Greek words for the word "ASK."
- One word (EROTAO) would be used in the context of asking a question or making a demand of a FRIEND. It is the word is used when two people of the same status speak to one another.
  - (Example: Bob, can you help me train leaders for the home groups)
- (AITEO) is the word for "ASK" that is used when an inferior asks something of his superior. It could be translated "petition or request."
  - (Example – "Boss" could I take Friday off this week?)

Look at how Jesus compares the disciples approach to HIM as they have walked together over the past 3 years with how they should approach the Father following Jesus' ascension:  
John 16:23 **In that day (the day when Jesus has ascended and the Spirit has been given) you will ask (EROTAO – to ask of a friend) nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask (AITEO – petition / request) of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.**  
24 **Until now you have asked (AITEO) nothing in my name. Ask, (AITEO) and you will receive, that your joy may be full.**25**"I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. 26 In that day you will ask (AITEO) in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask (EROTAO) the Father on your behalf;**

- Why am I bringing out the difference in the Greek words? They reveal a change. The disciples could inquire of God (ask Jesus) anytime! Now he is going to the Father.
- How could they (WE) approach God in prayer now that Jesus has ascended?
- (The Good News) believing men have been placed in a right relationship with God (Justified) by the grace of God through faith in Christ's life, death and resurrection, they now have access to the Father and can make their petitions, in Jesus' name.
- They can petition God in a new way. Jesus has provided ACCESS directly to the Father.

Ephesians 3:11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.

- Our access to the Father is by virtue of the finished work of Christ on the cross.
- NOW we can with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- The abundance of this privilege and grace is expressed through the open-ended invitation that is given to those who believe:

## 2. Promised Response is on the way

John 16: 24 Until now you have asked (AITEO) nothing in my name. Ask, (AITEO) and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

- Jesus assures his disciples that their petitions will be heard and that God would graciously respond.
- We saw similar promises in the previous 2 chapters:

John 14:13 Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

John 15: 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

- I am astounded by the liberal nature of God's promised response: (14:14) If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (15:16) whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you
- These verses are frequently quoted by the materialistic preachers who falsely teach that God wants everyone to be rich.
- For them the name of Jesus is a magic phrase tacked on to any expression of personal desire that obligates God to answer.

John MacArthur: "To pray "In Jesus name" is not to use his name as a formula, ritualistically tacked onto the end of a prayer to ensure its success. Rather, it is to pray for that which is consistent with Christ's person and will, and to affirm one's complete dependence on him to supply every need with the goal that He would be glorified in the answer."

- Our continual study of God's Word helps us to know God's will and that understanding should shape our prayer life.
  - The disciples were taught to pray: "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (HIS kingdom, his divine rule in my life and in the lives of men and women everywhere is high on the list of prayer priorities)

- Give us this day our daily bread (*low carb wrap* – we seek God’s provision)
- Deliver us from evil (Barns - “The Evil” Deliver us from his power, his snares, his arts, his temptations. 2 Cor 2:11 *We are not ignorant of his devices.*)
- We pray that Christ would be glorified in the church
- We pray that The H.S. would have his way in us transforming us into the image of Jesus.
- His will is revealed in his Word and when we pray according to his will we know that He answers our requests.

I don’t think it is a coincidence that Jesus’ instruction on prayer to his beloved disciples is followed by an entire chapter in which Jesus’ actual prayer is recorded for us.

What a wonderful prayer it is! The Lord’s Prayer has Three parts: (We will consider one today)

- Christ’s prayer for himself (Vs 1-5)
- He prays for his Apostles (Vs 6-19)
- He prays for ALL those (including us) who would come to faith through the Word of God as communicated through the Apostles.

### 3. Paradigm of Prayer from the one who is the way

Before we begin reading Jesus’ prayer let’s take just a minute to weigh the true majesty of what it is that we are really hearing: This is the intimate communication between God the Son and God the Father.

- How profound, how deep, how unfathomable must be the interaction between the members of the eternal Godhead: Isaiah 55: 8 *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.* 9 *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*
- And yet, in this, rare glimpse that John provides for us we find divine communication expressed in plain language. Simple words that any 6<sup>th</sup> grader could comprehend. Obviously this is for our benefit and our encouragement.

Boice: *“This prayer should be to us something of what the burning bush was to Moses, for here we hear God speaking, and we should put off our shoes and bow humbly, being about to tread on the most hallowed ground.”*

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, 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.*

The hour of Christ’s suffering was looming right in front of him. This was the hour that was planned by the Godhead from eternity past, the hour in which God the Father would offer his One and Only Son in sacrifice for the sins of men.

- The prayer of Jesus is offered in accordance with the will of God, for the benefit of His beloved church and for the display of God’s glory.

When Jesus prays for himself he brings only ONE petition. (17:1) “Glorify your Son.” (17:5) *And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

In the opening verse of John’s Gospel we find the Lord Jesus, in the beginning (*before the creation*) existing continually in a glorified state, face to face with the father.

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.*

- It was the plan of God from eternity past that the Eternal Son of God would take on human flesh for the very purpose of redeeming men from the curse of sin.
- The act of putting on human flesh in essence veiled the glory of the second person of the Trinity. Charles Wesley incorporates this thought in one of my favorite Xmas Hymns.

Hark the Herald angels sing:

*“Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail th’incarnate Deity, Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.”*

John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

- Although his glory was veiled in flesh, WE do see manifestations of that glory throughout his earthly ministry.

John 2: 11 (at the wedding of Cana where Jesus turned water into wine) *This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*

Later: When Jesus heard that his friend Lazarus was sick he spoke to his disciples:

John 11:4 *But when Jesus heard it he said, “This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”*

- There was one time when Peter, James and John went up on a mountain to pray with the Lord Jesus. There on what we know as the Mount of Transfiguration, the glory of the Lord Jesus was clearly revealed to his 3 closest disciples.

Luke 9:29 *And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. 30 And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.*

- Like the O.T. Shekinah, The glory of the Lord was manifest in brilliant light.
- These and many other times the veil was pulled back in order that those who had eyes to see might see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

NOW As Jesus approaches the cross, he anticipates a return to his rightful place, a return to his preincarnate glory, at the right hand of the Father. So he prays: 5 *And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.*

- What was the Basis of this prayer? (pause) The eternal plan of God, the express will of God, as recorded in his Word:

- IN God's Word the plan of God is communicated.... God will not allow Christ to remain in the grave. (His body will not experience corruption)

Psalm 16: 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. 10 For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.

- The prophet Isaiah tells us that once Christ made atonement for sin he would be glorified: Isaiah 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for sin, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.

When you consider Jesus' Prayer: 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

- How do we know his prayer was answered?

Philippians 2: 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We see him in all of his glory in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 The hairs of his head were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, 15 his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. 16 In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, 18 and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

#### Keys to Jesus answered prayer:

1. His prayer was in direct agreement with the eternal plan of God.
  - Christ would be glorified through the proclamation of the Gospel in every nation.
  - His kingdom would be established in the hearts of those who are His own.
2. His prayer was in agreement with the expressed Word of God.
  - The God would protect us from the Evil One.
  - That Believers would walk in love and love one another.
3. His heart was in complete submission to the Father God.
  - This is where you yield your body as a living sacrifice every morning in an act of true worship.

