

Series: John
Title: I Pray for Them
Text: John 17: 6-10
Date: Sept
Place: SGBC, NJ

This is our Lord's high priestly prayer. This is truly the Lord's prayer. The model prayer that our Lord taught us cannot be the Lord's prayer because he taught us to pray that our sins be forgiven. He knew no sin. That prayer is an example or model of our prayer. This is the Lord's prayer.

There is a word here for you who believe. If you believe on the Lord Jesus this is a word for you. If Christ alone is the reason you believe, if God gets all the glory, if Christ is all your Salvation, your only Righteousness, your only hope is Christ alone and you have no confidence in self, only in Christ, then get this word. Christ says

John 17: 9: I pray for them...

That night, Christ was interceding for his apostles, his disciples, those he had called. And our High Priest prayed for his elect who would believe by his grace. He said,

John 17: 20: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

What a tremendous word of comfort! If Christ alone is your salvation, right now, at God's right hand, Christ intercedes for you. He says, "*I pray for them.*"

In my last point, I want to show you why this is such a blessing for you and me who believe. If you will stay with me and hear everything leading up that point (and I pray the whole message will be a blessing) but in my last point, I have something very needful, very comforting for you who believe.

First, here is the question for all who are hearing this. How did you come to know Christ? How did you begin in faith? How have you continued in faith to this day? The way a sinner begins in faith is the difference between true faith and the vain faith of men. The way a sinner continues in faith is the difference in true faith and a vain confidence.

When we see how Christ's apostles and the other disciples began in faith when he walked this earth then we see how his disciples since then have begun in faith and continued in faith. This declares how his apostles and his other disciples began in faith. Christ said,

John 17: 6: I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

DID YOUR FAITH BEGIN IN ETERNITY?

The gift of true faith began in eternity with God our Father. Our faith began with God the Father giving his chosen people to Christ. The Lord Jesus said, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me."

Sinner, do you rejoice in this good news? Was your faith given you because you were God the Father's from eternity? It is only those that were the Father's that Christ manifests God's name unto. He said, "*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me.*"

This is the certainty of salvation. Those Christ gives faith are those the Father eternally loved! "*Thine they were.*" Those given faith to believe on Christ were God the Father's from eternity. All men belong to God by creation. But those the Spirit gives faith were God the Father's because he loved them and chose them by his free grace. God the Father chose those he saves by free and sovereign grace. The heavenly Father loved them without a cause in us. He chose to save his people without a cause in us. God the Father chose to save his people by manifesting his name to them in Christ his Son.

Was your faith given you because in eternity God the Father entrusted you to his Son? Those given faith in time are those the Father gave to his Son in eternity—“*thine they were, and thou gavest them me.*” The Father gave his elect to Christ to save. The Son of God entered covenant to redeem God’s elect from the curse of the law by laying down his life. The Son entered covenant to quicken and call and manifest the name of God unto us by the Spirit. Christ entered covenant to bring us to God in Christ’s perfect righteousness. The apostle Paul declares that everything Christ accomplished for his people in time, those born of the Spirit of God and given faith to trust Christ, were chosen by the Father, predestinated unto salvation and trusted to the Son to save.

Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8: Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9: Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: 11: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 13: In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

So for those God the Father gave to Christ, the Lord intercedes with the Father, saying, “*I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me.*”

DO YOU BELIEVE BECAUSE CHRIST MANIFEST GOD’S NAME TO YOU?

This is how the disciples were given faith. Christ manifest the Father’s name to them. Do you have faith because Christ manifest God’s name to you? This is how every chosen child of God is given faith in Christ. The Lord Jesus said, “*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me.*”

Christ prays for those who give Christ all the glory for their faith. Those with true faith confess we have faith because Christ manifest the name of God to us. It is for those that Christ prays. It is only by Christ that we have faith. In this prayer Christ declared concerning his power in verse 2, “*thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.*” This was God’s purpose for which he gave his people to his Son—“*that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him*”

Then Christ declared what life eternal really is. He said in verse 3, “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*” True faith in Christ is given by the power of Christ who rules all flesh. He gives a knowledge of himself. Doing so he gives us a knowledge of the triune God.

Scripture is clear. While Christ walked this earth, he came to each one he called or drew them to himself and called them by declaring the gospel to them. Through the word he preached, Christ manifest the name of the Father unto them.

He said that he must needs to through Samaria because he knew the woman at the well was one the Father gave him. He called the woman at the well, giving her a knowledge of the triune God in him by his power. The Lord Jesus sent the disciples across the sea to Gadara because the demon possessed man was one God gave him. Christ called him by his power revealing the triune God in him. The leper heard about him and came to him and Christ did the same to him. He came directly to Zacchaeus and called him. He is doing the same now from glory. After the Lord Jesus ascended, he put Paul in prison to preach the gospel to the Philippian jailor and in the power of our Lord, he called his elect among them. He sent Paul to Lydia by the river. He sent Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch on the backside of the dessert and revealed himself in the eunuch by his power.

The Lord Jesus Christ, as Mediator between God the Father and those the Father gave him, is God in human flesh. He is the fulness of the godhead bodily (Col 2: 9). He has all power in heaven and in earth. Christ is God in human flesh. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. The wind and waves obeyed his command while he walked this earth. Animals obey him. Not a hair or a sparrow falls without him. He and the Father are one in sovereign will and purpose in the salvation of his people.

Christ has power over all flesh. Even the wicked and disobedient who were never given him of the Father, who he never manifests himself unto, are ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ. Every man in this earth—all flesh—are under his power. Man's sin is all of his own will and none is to blame but the sinner. But Christ has power to restrain men's evil and power to use their evil to fulfill the Father's purpose of salvation for his people, even as they rebel against him and boast in their own free will.

Believer, Christ worked everything that has come to pass since the first tick of the clock to bring the gospel to you to manifest God's name in you. If we are one in whom he has manifest his name we say, "Amen!" We are thankful it is so!

By his power over all flesh, he brought the gospel to us and manifest God's name in our hearts.

He manifest God's name *Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide*. By revealing himself in our hearts, he manifest to us that God the Father provided him, his only begotten Son, to be our Substitute (Genesis 22:13-14). Christ took the place of his people on the cross like the ram God provided to take Isaac's place.

The Lord Jesus manifest God's name *Jehovah-tsidkenu, the LORD our Righteousness*. He gave us faith to believe that he made us the righteousness of God in him by his blood on the cross (Jeremiah 23:6). We have no righteousness God will accept, except in Christ Jesus the Lord our Righteousness.

Christ manifest God's name *Jehovah-kawdesh, the LORD that sanctifieth thee*. When he took up residence in our heart by his Holy Spirit he created a new holy man. He separated us from our sinful flesh, not we ourselves. We found ourselves believing him and following him out of this world. His presence in our hearts is the holiness that sanctified us. By the Holy Spirit he separated us out of this world and continues to keep us separated unto him (Exodus 31:13).

The Son of God our Savior manifest God's name *Jehovah-rapha, the Lord that healeth thee*. He healed us by his presence in our hearts (Exodus 15:26). Christ is our eternal life. With his stripes we are healed. We shall never die. Christ has made us eternally healed. He is the great Physician.

The Lord Jesus manifest God's name *Jehovah-shalom, the Lord our peace*. He made us know he accomplished our Peace with God on the cross. By the power of the Lord Jesus in our new man, he made us cease warring against God in our hearts. He is the power that made us be reconciled to God in faith (Judges 6:24).

Christ manifest God's name *Jehovah-nissi, the Lord our Banner*. When he made us willing to believe on him and confess him, the Lord made us willing to follow him all our days. By his power he made us willing to identify with his people under Christ our Banner. We rally with his people under Christ our Banner. He is our one message (Exodus 17:8-15).

The Lord Jesus manifest God's name *Jehovah-raah, our Shepherd*. He brought us under his rod and his staff, the gospel. It was by the staff, the rod, that shepherds numbered and kept their sheep. Christ is our Shepherd. He called us out unto him by the rod of the gospel. Christ began leading us. He leads us every day and shall lead us unto the end (Psalm 23:1). His rod and his staff—his gospel—comforts us.

Christ manifest his name *Jehovah-shammah, the Lord is there, present*. He saves through the preaching of the gospel because by this means he makes us cease glorying in our sinful, self-righteous works. He appeared to us in that place where he had gathered his church and given his gospel. The Lord is there. The Lord was nowhere but where he set up his name and promised to meet with his people. In the church Christ has gathered the Lord is there as he promised. He promised to never leave us nor forsake us. He is present in his people (Ezekiel 48:35). It is only when we are saved through the power of the gospel that we know this is so and know our need to assemble where the gospel is preached. We know the Lord is there.

Be sure to get this. Before we knew his name, the whole time that Christ was working all things to bring the gospel to you, child of God, our great Intercessor was praying for you. Before his people knew him, he knew us and prayed for us. Before we believed him, he was the Surety of each child given him of the Father and he prayed particularly for you.

Now, by experiencing the power of Christ our God and Savior, we know Christ has power over all flesh to bring the gospel to each one and manifest the name of the Father to those the Father gave him. Now we know that all the while he prays for them in particular as he does for us. This is why we preach the gospel to every sinner. This is why we declare plainly as he declared that whosoever believes on the Lord Jesus shall never perish, but have eternal life!

Get what this means, child of God. What comfort for the believing mother and father whose child is yet lost! What comfort for the child who prays for their lost mother or father! We have this rejoicing, this assurance. If the Father everlastingly loved your lost child, your lost parents, your lost loved ones, if God gave them to his Son, then Christ made them righteous by his death on the cross. The Son shall manifest his name to them. It is certain. What comfort for his preachers! What comfort for the whole church of our Lord Jesus as we preach the gospel!

HOW IS OUR FAITH ACCEPTED?

Here is the great comfort for you who know that your faith is of God. This is comfort and assurance for you who know your faith is small. This is assurance because it is by Christ's intercession that our faith is accepted. It is by his perfect faithfulness that he presents us to the Father in him and accepts us though our faith is so mixed with unbelief. Here the Lord Jesus pray to the Father.

John 17: 6: I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. 7: Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. 8: For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. 9: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. 10: And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

This is such comfort for us when we think of the apostles and disciples for whom the Lord prayed. Indeed, by his power and grace they had received his words and kept them. The Lord had given them a few tests and by his grace they continued in faith. When the multitude walked away, by the power and grace of the Lord Jesus and God the Father through the Holy Spirit,

John 6: 68: Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69: And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

But how very weak their faith was! How very little their knowledge! Even John the Baptist sent word asking, "Are you the Christ or do we look for another?" How troubled their hearts were on many occasions, even that very hour!

When he told them they were going to Lazarus' tomb in Bethany near Jerusalem, "*His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?" (Jn 11: 8). At Lazarus' tome, Mary and Martha wept in unbelief and said, "Lord if you had been here our brother had not died" (Jn 11: 21, 32). Their hearts were troubled. Is your heart ever troubled, believer? The Lord Jesus declared that if we believe on him we shall see the glory of God. But do you see how little their faith was? How often their faith was mixed with unbelief?

Christ told them he would go to the cross. Peter even tried to persuade him not to go. The Lord told them, he was going to prepare a place for his people. "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (Jn 14: 5) The Lord said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me. If ye know me, you know the Father: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us" (14: 5-11). As he spoke of the Spirit, one said, "Lord, how is it thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not unto the world?" (Jn 14: 22)

They were confused and said, “What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?” He told them and finally, they said, “Now you are speaking plainly. Now we believe you camest forth from God.” The Lord declared it was he that would keep them when they were filled with unbelief and denied and fled from him.

John 15: 31: Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? 32: Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. 33: These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

When Peter denied him three times and they all fled and left him alone, their faith failed not—for one reason—Christ prayed for them.

Luke 22: 31: And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: 32: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33: And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34: And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Why does our faith fail not? Why does your faith fail not, child of God? It is only because Christ intercedes for you.

Now get the point of this wonderful truth of Christ’ intercession. As he prays for his people, he mentions not one word concerning their unbelief. He says, *“They have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”*

The lesson is comforting and instructive. The Lord speaks as it really is! In him, by him, by his perfect faith alone Christ has put away all our sins, even the sin of our unbelief and doubting and fear. It is by Christ’s perfect faithfulness that Christ makes no mention of our unbelief, only the faith Christ has given and sustained in us.

In his apostle and other disciples, we see something of our own unbelief, trouble, doubts and fears. But the least faith is precious to our Redeemer, even when no bigger than a grain of mustard seed. He looks on us with compassion; he knows our infirmities. And Christ has put away all the sins of his people, even our sins of unbelief, doubts, and fears. He owns his people as faithful, though our faith and understanding be so very small. He declared a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple he remembers.

And as Christ prays for us, it is his faith that God looks upon as perfect! It is the faithfulness of Christ working in us that keeps us believing on him. When we see him interceding for us, we see it is only by his perfect faith that we are accepted. When we see him recover Peter and the others, we see that it is only by his faithfulness working in us that our faith fails not.

This why those with true faith do not boast in our faith. We say what Peter said when the Lord restored him, "Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you" (Jn 21: 15-17). The Lord Jesus did not despise their feeble faith—nor ours. He gave them faith. He sustained it. He interceded for them. Thus they believed unto the end. And so shall each one that Christ has given faith.

You see, those loved and chosen of God the Father did not cease being the Father’s when he gave them to the Son. They are everlastingly the possession of God the Father and his Son. If our faith is all of Christ, if we rely on his intercession on our behalf, if it is his faith and his faithfulness that we depend on. It is the Lord’s prayer for us that is the guarantee that he shall keep you unto the end. He says, *“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.”* (Joh 17:9-10 AV) He did not say “we” are glorified in them because he is one God—Father, Son and Spirit are one. He is the great “I AM!” He said, *“All mine are thine, and all thine are mine; and I AM glorified in them.”* Since the glory of the Father and the Son is

wrapped up in Christ saving us unto the end, let us be thankful for our Savior's never-ending intercession for us. What a comfort! What assurance! Only to hear our Savior say, "*I pray for them!*"

Amen!