

Gamma – Gospel of John

Book	Gospel of John
Topic	Jesus Prayer for Us
Reference	John 17
Date	24 January 2018
Speaker	Dr Peter Ng

This chapter is extremely important in today's age, because the kind of Christianity we are seeing in today seems very-very different from the kind of Christianity which is seen in Jesus prayer for his disciples. If you look at Jesus prayer for his disciples and you look at the way we pray for each other, we actually see very little resemblance. We mostly pray for our needs, but if you actually look at what issues are important to Jesus, they don't seem to be on his radar screen. Why this is prepared is very important because John 17 will reflect what Jesus is praying for in heaven today, because the Bible says he intercedes for us. So if someone is praying for you, what is he praying for you about. So it is important to see Jesus priorities, this is just before the crucifixion, the night before he is arrested and he is in the upper room. This is the last goodbye as it were, so therefore it is important. So this passage will talk about Jesus praying to the father and we are actually listening in and that's such a privilege where we have got two big guns praying and talking to each other. We are going to be listening to what Jesus is talking to his father about. It is an intra-Godhead conversation. Not only that makes it important but is also a death parade message. Any death parade is very important because when your life is going to be taken away, all the things that are very important to you will come sharply into focus and that's what you are going to focus on.

There are seven things that Jesus Christ is praying for us every single day.

- 1) Declaration of who his disciples are
- 2) The protection of his disciples
- 3) The disciples will glorify Him
- 4) His disciples will experience the joy in missions
- 5) Sanctification of his disciples
- 6) The unity of his disciples
- 7) The disciples will be glorified with Him

1. JESUS DECLARES WHO HIS DISCIPLES ARE:

*John 17:6-10 (ESV) "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. **7** Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. **8** For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came*

from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

So if you look at this particular passage, the question is **who is a Christian?** Is it someone who basically worship with his hands raised up and has got a fantastic emotion when he is actually praying or in a worship meeting or is there somebody who actually proves that he is a Christian by doing good works and feeding the poor or it is a pastor or is it a president.

Now the first thing is that whether you are a Christian or not the disciples actually are chosen by God, even before Jesus has interacted with them. It is in God's eternal plan. He has decided who they are. Basically what God the father has done is given it to Jesus. So there is a subset of people within this world which God has taken out and says these are my people. So basically it doesn't depend on your ethnicity or your intelligence or your capabilities or what you've done in the past, it is whether they have kept your word. Kept your word is not past tense, it is a continuous process in which they actually keep his word.

So if you were to look at a train, it goes on a track. The track has two rails. On one side, you cannot see, it is called specially chosen and belonging to God. On the other hand, it is keeping God's word. A chosen person will keep God's word

*John 17:7-8 (ESV) Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them **the words** that you gave me, and they have **received them** and have **come to know in truth** that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.*

That's the truth. If Jesus comes from God, it means that he is the son of God, and God sent Jesus on a mission that he will redeem and make his people holy. That is the truth that Jesus is the son of God and God has send him on a mission that we might become Holy.

*John 20:30-31 (ESV) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written so that you may believe that **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

The truth that this world desperately needs to know is that Jesus is son of God and God has sent Jesus to make us holy. So if you boil the whole gospel down, it is just that other people have a philosophy, they have a way to reach God, we have a person and the person is a son of God and God has sent Jesus to make us holy that's the truth that will define. So it doesn't matter whether you feel close to God now or whether you raise your hands to sing or you feel exhilarated, the issue is to ask yourself the question, do you believe that Jesus is the son of God and do you believe that God has sent him to us to make us holy. That's a central thing. So now if you look at all religions and you look at Christianity, the central truth of the gospel is that in all other religions we offer our religious lives to God in order to please him. In Christianity, Jesus lives a righteous life and offers it to God on our

behalf. That's completely different, that's why the gospel is absolutely different from any other religion in the world because every other religion gives you a way in which you could strive to be perfect, to be good, to be holy, to be righteous, to walk in God's path and when you come to God, God will weigh on the scales and if you are okay he will pass you, if you are not okay you are gone. Christianity is completely different, it says Jesus is the son of God, he came into the world in order to live a righteous life and offers it to you, so you are not there on your merit, you are there on his merit that's a central truth.

2. JESUS PRAYS FOR THE PROTECTION OF HIS DISCIPLES

*9 I am **praying for them**. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.*

So he is praying for their protection, we intimately belong to God and this prayer reflects that. So he is praying, the first thing he has done is that he has defined who his disciples are, those who believe the truth. The first thing he is thinking about; you need to protect them. He is telling God the father that we need to protect them because they are going to undergo great stress. He is not praying for the rest of the world, when you are his disciple you have his special attendance. He is praying for them.

*John 17:11-15 (ESV) And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, **keep them in your name**, ...*

So Jesus is leaving them, he is going to be crucified. He is going to die and then he is going to resurrect and he is going to leave them. So if he is going to leave them, the first thing that is in your mind is to keep them in your name, it means keep them in what all that God represents and is. You are made in the image of God and so therefore when you say keep them in the faith of knowing God the father, whom Jesus has taught them.

*... which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have **guarded them**, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming 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 ask that you take them out of the world, but **that you keep them from the evil one**.*

So therefore keeping them in your name, guarding them and keeping them from the evil one does not necessarily mean physical protection. Important thing is keeping them from the evil one. Let me give you an example:

*Luke 22:31-34 (ESV) Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that **your faith may not fail**. And when you*

have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” 33 Peter said to him, “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.” 34 Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”

We can conclude that the devil is involved in our lives, it is like the devil and Jesus having a bit of conversation, but he has to ask permission from Jesus. So the devil isn't all powerful, he has to ask permission from Jesus to put you through a trial. The Satan does come to every single one of us in our lives whether it be illness, setback, financial difficulty within your family or quarrels, all these things is basically Satan asking God for permission. There is no trial outside that permission. Peter and Judas actually failed, both of them are broken but for Judas

*John 13:27 (ESV) Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “**What you are going to do, do quickly.**”*

Because it has been predicted in the scripture that he would fail. Judas actually betrayed Jesus Christ and instead of repenting he killed himself. If Jesus prays for you it doesn't mean that you will not fall, but there is a difference between Judas and Peter. Peter betrayed Jesus three times, Judas did it one time. The difference between them is repentance, it is not the sin, it is what happens after the sin. So you can see the perseverance, when Jesus prays for you it doesn't necessarily mean that you will pass the test, a lot of times we fail the test but it is that power of God through the Holy Spirit that actually brings you back. Judas failed because he like all other religions, even though he was led by Jesus for three years, he believed I have got to be good in order to earn God's respect and earn my way to heaven. So when he actually betrayed Jesus Christ he couldn't live with his failure, because he was trying to earn salvation. Peter on the other hand fell on his knees and realized that he betrayed God and realized that he is a sinner and he needs to repent and go back to God. That's the issue, and sometimes with our sin this is how the devil affects us. When we sin, he will whisper you are still in sin.

When someone tells you that I will not go to church because I haven't cleaned up my life first, it doesn't happen this way. You come to church because you cannot clean up your life, that's the issue. If you can clean up your life, we won't need Jesus anymore. So basically you come to church because you cannot clean up your life and you need him to clean up your life. So that is why it is not the fact that we sin but the fact is what we do with our sins that we need to repent and change. Everywhere in this world where they persecute Christians, they grow, because Jesus will make sure that they may fall but they will come back. They will repent, that's what he is.

When you fall remember you will come back, all you have to do is to repent.

3. JESUS IS GLORIFIED BY THE CHURCH

10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

That means Jesus looks good, he is glorified in the church. Is Jesus is glorified by how big the church is, the size or the building?

Concept of Glory

The Old Testament idea of glory is from the Hebrew word kabot, which means weighty, worthy, beautiful, powerful, but Jesus idea of glory is a little bit different.

John 17:1-5 (ESV) 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.

So now Jesus comes to us at the end of his ministry. He has glorified the father by keeping true to the father's nature and character in the world. Now he is going to have the ultimate glorification which is the cross and after the cross he is going to go back to the father.

John 1:14-17 (ESV) 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. 15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

This word is repeated twice, grace. In the Old Testament when you look at the glory of God, it is his shining presence as well as his goodness. In the New Testament God's glory is shown in the son, Jesus Christ, by his grace and his truth which is seen in his miracles and his power and his power is actually exercised as an expression of his love and faithfulness to his people and the ultimate glory is on the cross, because he dies for you.

If Jesus is glorified by hanging on the cross, the church should be glorified by sacrifice and serving the people of this world. It is when you get on your cross and everybody gets on his cross. When people see the sacrifice, they will see the love of Christ exemplified in his people. If you don't see the sacrifice, you don't see the glory there. The only way you glorify Jesus is when you step out of your own ambitions and start to live for him that's when they will see Jesus themselves. Jesus is glorified by our sacrificial loving for the world,

not by the trappings of wealth and the number that reside in the church. It is the truth, the truth will change you.

4. JESUS PRAYS FOR THEM TO HAVE THE JOY IN MISSIONS

*John 17:13-18 (ESV) But now I am coming 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 ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 **As you sent me** into the world, so **I have sent them into the world**.*

So he is saying that they may have joy fulfilment in themselves when they go out into the world as Jesus has sent them. There is a connection between missions and joy. All of us have aspirations in life. When you were young you have got this brilliant aspiration that you would do something with your life, something that matter for a cause larger than yourself. Some of us wanted to be Superman, Spiderman or Wonder Woman, but then life came in the way and then our dreams keep tumbling down. The world tells us we should magnify our existence in this world as paramount to your own personal happiness. Later on, instead of being the Ultraman or Superman to conquer the world and save the world, instead of saving the world you wind up just satisfying yourself. The world tells you, don't worry about saving the world, save yourself first. They tell you to uncover your personal happiness, but the issue is if you exaggerate your significance you will actually lose it, you will actually lose your significance. In the old days everybody will go to the house and we will see many people, people in China use to live for the family. The family was number one. Today is different, our families are so small and nuclear that basically we only look after ourselves, because the circle has got smaller and smaller and smaller. So therefore it is my career, my health, my emotional needs, my financial needs. When you ask for prayer, it is all that. It is a different kind of Christianity.

So basically Tim Keller says, *"By putting my needs first we have gained our freedom but lost our joy"*

God doesn't bring you in and bless you and just give you all this blessing for blessing sake.

*Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, **who for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

This is Jesus, notice the words, for the joy set before him, which means that Jesus was in the garden of gethsemane, he is praying, before him is the shame and pain of the cross and then the joy afterwards.

What he is praying for? When he prays what motivates his life?

The motivation is the joy, he is not saying, God give me more pain, give me more cross, if you are doing that there is something wrong with you. Jesus looks forward not to the cross, as an instrument of torture, but the joy because of what the cross has accomplished. So therefore if we are to be like Jesus we need to look at the joy that accompanies our mission. You want joy, don't pray for joy, go to missions, share the gospel, help a friend then you will see the joy.

John 17:18 (ESV) As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

We need to live for cause larger than ourselves, because if you just look after yourself then you will gain your freedom but you will lose your significance.

*Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV) Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. **2** And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. **3** I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**"*

There is an ultimate motive there, God blesses you, so that you bless other people. God never take you in, in order to bless you for yourself. There is a purpose there. Now why did God choose Israel, it is so unfair, why didn't God gave the message to every single nation. God chooses Israel, so that Israel will take the message of the gospel and bring it to the rest of the world. The prosperity gospel does the opposite. Joel Osteen says, God wants us to prosper financially, to have plenty of money to fulfil the destiny he has laid out for us. His destiny is plenty of money; you cannot even take it with you when you die. So what's the use, it is completely opposite to what Jesus prays for.

5. JESUS PRAYS TO SANCTIFY THEM IN THE TRUTH

*John 17:16-19 (ESV) They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. **17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18** As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. **19** And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be **sanctified in truth.***

Sanctified comes from a Greek word, which means set apart, made holy. So basically Jesus is saying, he wants them to be made holy, set apart for God's purposes. So the way we become holy is we made holy by embracing Jesus truth, which is the gospel. We are inspired by the Holy Spirit and we make a decision to want to be made holy and then you

take in the word of God with the power of Holy Spirit and then you understand his love, you believe and when you believe, it changes your values and when it changes your values it changes your heart, you respond emotionally and with action and that's fruit, which is in John 15.

A transformed person will be transformed by the Holy Spirit with the truth in his mind and it will translate to a lifestyle. The Holy Spirit works if you've got the word marinated into your flesh, so your flesh becomes soft and pliable to the Holy Spirit.

How did Jesus prepare his disciples?

He didn't conduct training sessions with them. What he did was he prepared them by telling them the truth, transformation by truth, so that they completely different in their programming and the values and the direction. He just changed them in three years, walking next to Jesus Christ, what they like to eat, what they love to do, how they think, it completely changed and when they are changed then they can embark on missions. We cannot minister to a broken world if we ourselves are still broken. We have to be renewed whole by the Holy Spirit. We have to be sanctified and then when we are sanctified we are sent into the world.

The book of Corinthians tells us that the Corinthians were very immoral people. So when they became Christians, it was very hard for them to stop immorality. They have acrocorinth where every day 1000 prostitutes will come and every night people will go up there and worship God with having sex. They call it sanctified sex. Then they argued that you can continue to do this, they actually wrote food is meant for the stomach, stomach for the food. So if I am hungry, I eat food, if I want to have sex I can have sex anywhere, it doesn't really matter who it is that's the argument. Now Paul can very easily come to them and say, do not sin, you must not go to a prostitute, but this is what he does. He says, flee, not only flee but then he tells you why,

- (ESV) and God will destroy both one and the other. It means your stomach. That means you stomach is temporal. So what you do in your temporal thing doesn't just stay here, but there is a deeper meaning
- (ESV) The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. It means don't engage in sexual immorality because your body has a higher purpose. It is a spiritual purpose beyond the lifespan of this world.
- (ESV) your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? You are already married to Christ, how can you take your body and join with the body of a prostitute.
- (ESV) sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

The Holy Spirit works by taking the truth and letting you engage and think and marinate and meditate and your mind is changed and the values are changed and that's how you

live. If you do it the other way, where you actually just do it on your own will power and you don't really understand you will fail or you do it the other way, you are waiting for some special preacher to come and lay hands on you, so that your immorality will fly away like evil spirit, you will also fail, because you don't understand how the Holy Spirit work. The Holy Spirit only works in the context of the word of God and you take in the word of God and you reflecting, meditating and engaging.

6. CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

*John 17:20-23 (ESV) 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they **may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that **they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.*****

So the importance of community, the Christian church does not live alone. Community is very-very important, there are no Christian monks as it were. The problem with your sin, when you sin you go into self-pity, you tell people I am unique, no one understands me, when we sin it creates isolation and separation and apart from God's love human community is not possible.

Tracey Crouch is a Minister of Loneliness in UK. She says one in four adults is lonely and your loneliness causes high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic inflammation and even dementia. They reckon about 9 million people in the UK are actually suffering from chronic loneliness, it is a disaster that is set upon us because sin separates us, we fight because of the sin. Loneliness is equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day, because without the love of Christ we have no community.

Hiroki Terai has an institute in Japan, called the Crying Institute and the ladies who are divorced and kind of lonely they come around to the crying institute, they will show you a tear jerker kind of film that you cry, but crying with you is a handsome man. So when you cry with a handsome man, they have shown the pupils of the ladies dilate, they feel more excited and after that they feel much happier. You would never cry alone, why would you cry alone. There is something about crying with a handsome man. So the point is loneliness comes because of sin and it breaks us apart. So therefore what are the signs that the truth, it is a truth because it creates community. If Jesus Christ is the truth and God is the truth and he has designed us and you look at the church, they are all fighting all over the place, you know that this is not right. If sin isolates us and puts barriers between us and God comes and removes those barriers, then we will be united. That is what Jesus is saying

*John 17:20-23 (ESV) 20 "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they **may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me,***

So basically they are going to be united because of the common unity in belief. Christian unity is not denominational, it is not to be gained by having a council of churches, it is not because we have uniformed doctrine. The point is that you need to be united in only two aspects, that Jesus is the son of God and God has sent Jesus to make us holy and that central feature is a feature in most Christian faith all over the world.

The Christian unity is not because you are of the same ethnic group or you came from Israel or where you were born but you hold to a singular truth. The gospel truth hits us and the two truths that we need to know about is that Jesus is son of God and God has sent him to redeem us irrespective of whatever denomination you have and is impartial, it doesn't depend on your educational level or where you come from or what ethnic group and the trouble is, it is also costly.

To maintain the unity of church, the most important thing is forgiveness, because we are all sinners we will definitely piss each other off, because Christ has forgiven us. If the world looks at us and we see that they love each other and we are united by the central truth, then they will see that there is real love between the father and son in us.

The difference between a Christian church and a cult.

A cult has all the attracting of Christianity; they take the Christian covering but they remove Jesus Christ that's why the truth is very important.

7. JESUS PRAYS FOR THEIR GLORIFICATION

*John 17:24-26 (ESV) Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be **with me where I am**, to see **my glory** that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.*

How do we see Jesus's glory?

Jesus is praying day and night that we might be safely be home with him, so that we are eternally secure and join him in his unshielded glory. Jesus prays for the glorification and then he prays for that path to glory.

How do we get there?

25 O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them

When Jesus says I keep them in your name, keep them in the faith, the name represents the character of God and the person of God, Jesus has done that. What he is saying is that he is

going to guide us in the growing awareness of God's character. He is going to grow in the knowledge of Christ. We know how great he is, we are also aware of how awful we are and this two will go further and further apart.

As you grow in awareness of God's holiness and you grow in awareness of your flesh, you know the extent of his love grows greater and greater because what a great God. If God was a carpenter he dies for you, if God is a prime minister he dies for you, if God is a king of glory he dies for you, a big difference. So how high He is and how low you are, the axis will diverge and the difference between the two is the immensity of his love. So if you know him more and more then you will appreciate his love more and more that's right.

....that the love with which you have loved me may be in them

Jesus is talking to father. Jesus wants the same love between him and father in us, to experience that. That is what God wants us to be. The more Christ grows and how beautiful he is, the more we learn to rely on him and therefore he indwells in us.

The path to glory is growing in the knowledge of God and you grow in the experience of God and you grow in Christ likeness so that in the end you will be with Jesus Christ to see his glory. This is the path to glory in your life. So again Jesus is praying that you will be with him one day, you will come home and the path home is to grow in knowing Jesus, knowing God and experiencing in his love and because of that your behavior will change and you grow to be more Christ like.

With the Holy Spirit, the only way we can change is that Word of God comes into you and it change your heart and you actually see Jesus and experience Jesus. The beauty of Jesus changes you from inside and you will be in so love with him that you continue to want to grow.