



March 22, 2026

A Few Last Words Before I Go

The Prayer of Jesus

John 17

1. Sermon Outline:

- a. The Prayer of Jesus Reveals His Priorities
 - i. His glory
 - ii. Our unity
 - iii. Our Joy
 - iv. Our spiritual protection
 - v. Our sacred service to God
 - vi. For all generations of believers
- b. Make His Priorities Your Priorities
 - i. Many things we prioritize and pursue didn't make His prayer
 - ii. Prioritize His priorities

2. *Sunday Afternoon* – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. *Monday*:

- a. After completing the Farewell Discourse at the end of John 16, chapter 17 begins “When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up His eyes to heaven and said.” Then follows what countless preachers, theologians, and scholars have described as “the most remarkable portion of the most remarkable book in the world,” in which we are given the unique privilege of listening as God the Son converses with His Father just hours before He gives His life as a ransom for us sinners. And while Matthew 6:9-13 (and Luke 11:2-4) are traditionally given the title, these verses are indeed “The Lord’s Prayer.”
- b. Begin the week by reading John 17 slowly, meditating on each sentence as the Son addresses the Father.
 - i. What are the three main sections of Jesus’ prayer, and who does He pray for in each?

- ii. As you listen to Jesus' words, knowing that He is fully aware of the betrayal, arrest, and mock trial coming in the next chapter, how would you describe His attitude? Does He come across as one who has been defeated or as a victor?
- iii. Is there a single verse that you find gives you the greatest blessing? Why?

4. **Tuesday:**

- a. Read and meditate on John 17:1-5.
- b. These verses are the first and the shortest section of Jesus' prayer. Who or what is Jesus praying for in these 5 verses?
- c. Read John 2:4, 7:6, 8 & 30 and 8:20. What has changed when Jesus begins His prayer?
- d. How would you describe Jesus' motives and desires as He prays? In your own words, what would you say Jesus was asking the Father to do? Compare these verses with Philippians 2:6-11. What additional insight do you get from the Philippians passage?
- e. How does Jesus' statement in verse 2 give additional credence to Jesus' Great Commission (Matthew 28:18)? To John 3:16-18? Who does Jesus say will be saved (see also 6:37 & 39, 10:29, and 18:9)?
- f. How does Jesus define Eternal Life? Does His definition sound like what you hear most Christians emphasizing when they talk about Eternal Life? What additional insight is provided by Matthew 11:27?
- g. What does the tense Jesus uses in verse 4 say about the certainty of the events that would follow over the next three days?
- h. Finally, really meditate on what Jesus is saying to the Father in verse 5. Compare it to John's prologue (John 1:1-14). How do we know that God answered this request from Jesus (see Acts 7:56)?

5. **Wednesday:**

- a. Read and meditate on John 17:6-12
- b. To what or whom does Jesus shift His focus in this second section of His prayer (which continues through verse 19)?
- c. What does Jesus reveal about His disciples in verses 6-7? How did Jesus demonstrate His understanding of the Father's role when He selected the 12 Apostles (see Luke 6:12-13)?
- d. Thinking back to last week's questions, recall Jesus' question in John 16:31, "Do you now believe?" What answer is provided by verse 8?
- e. We know that God loves the world (John 3:16), so why is Jesus praying for His disciples and not for the world? What makes the disciples special (end of verse 9)? "The world" is used to describe several different things in the Bible. How does 1 John 2:15-17 show us which one Jesus is referring to in this prayer?

- f. To whom is Jesus entrusting His disciples as they continue to live “in the world”? How does Paul explain/amplify on this truth in Romans 8:35-39?
- g. In verse 11, Jesus provides an explanation for why the Father should watch over the disciples, which will be repeated several times in the rest of the prayer. What is the objective? What does He use as the standard? How often do you see that objective fulfilled in the church today?
- h. Verse 12 highlights the balance found throughout the Bible between God’s sovereignty and the freedom he allows mankind to exercise. Ultimately, who was responsible for Judas’ decision to betray Jesus?

6. **Thursday:**

- a. Read and meditate on John 17:13-19
- b. As Jesus continues to pray for His disciples, He shifts from praying for their unity. What aspect of their future does He focus on in these verses?
- c. How does Jesus’ prayer, especially verse 14, reinforce what He has been telling His disciples during the Farewell Discourse (see John 15:18-19 and 16:2-3)?
- d. Why do you think Jesus did not ask the Father to take the disciples out of the world (see verse 18 and Matthew 28:18-20)? Instead, what does He ask the Father to do for the disciples? According to 1 John 5:19, why is this request particularly important? What assurance does John give us in 1 John 4:4-6 and 5:3-5 that God has heard and answers Jesus?
- e. What does the word “sanctify” mean to you? Read Romans 15:16, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11, Ephesians 5:26-27, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, and 1 Peter 1:2. What does Jesus tell us will be the tool to accomplish our sanctification? What is the source of all truth according to John 1:17? What Five-to-Thrive spiritual practice does this say is particularly important (see Hebrews 4:12)?
- f. Jesus ends this section by stating, “I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.” What does Jesus mean when He says He will “sanctify myself” (consider Hebrews 7:26-27 and 10:10 & 14)?

7. **Friday:**

- a. Read and meditate on John 17:20-26
- b. In this final section of His prayer, Jesus again shifts His focus. Who is He praying for in these verses? Although the entire prayer is equally important, why should these verses particularly grab our attention?
- c. Why is it correct to say that everyone who becomes a Christian does so through the apostle's message? Without the apostles, what would we know about Jesus? What could we read about Him (note: Paul was considered to be an apostle – Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 1:1, etc.)?
- d. While praying for us, what does He request first? What standard does He again provide for what that should look like?

- e. What is the unity supposed to accomplish (verses 21b and 23b)? In your personal opinion, how well is the church doing in demonstrating the unity Jesus prayed for? How do you think our Christian witness would change if we were more united?
- f. What significant truth does Jesus reaffirm in verse 26 as He ends His prayer (compare to John 15:9)?

8. **Saturday:**

- a. One more time, read and meditate on “The Lord’s Prayer” in John 17.
- b. As you meditate on these verses, try to identify those portions that show these four spiritual priorities that were on our Savior’s heart as He prayed:
 - i. The Glory of God
 - ii. The sanctity of God’s people
 - iii. The unity of the church
 - iv. The ministry of sharing the Gospel with a lost world

9. **Application:** While there are a tremendous number of applications and truths contained in the words of Jesus as He communicates with His Father, and it is appropriate that we seek them out, the most obvious is also the most easily overlooked: *Jesus prayed*. We see that truth in many places in the Gospels, but nowhere else is the intimacy between the Father and the Son so clearly demonstrated. And the oneness Jesus shared with the Father is the oneness He prays we will have. We are invited into the conversation (17:20-21). Can there be a greater reason for a Christian to live a life of prayer?

10. **Pray:** This week, please pray for these two unreached people groups in the Himalayan countries of Nepal and Bhutan that IMB has highlighted in their *2026 Loving the Lost through Prayer* guide:

- a. Kanu: The 164,000 Kanu people of Nepal (also known as Halwai, Kandu) make their living roasting grain, making sweets, trading, and shopkeeping. Despite this business connection, they remain economically and socially disadvantaged because of their caste ranking. They are almost all Hindus and have been so for hundreds of years. As Hindus, they seek hope in reincarnation, doing what they can to appease Hindu gods through endless rituals. They hope for blessings in their difficult circumstances, but these practices offer no true spiritual fruit or salvation. There are no known Christian churches among them, and few, if any, Christians who live anywhere near them. Pray for the gospel to spread among the Kanu. Ask that they will hear and believe how much God loves them.
- b. Kurtop: The approximately 19,000 Kurtop people live in isolated areas in northern Bhutan. The nation’s royal family has a special connection to the Kurtop people, tracing their ancestry back to one of these remote villages. The Kurtop follow Tibetan Buddhism, which influences all aspects of their lives. Most families consider it an honor to send their young sons to a monastery for a time. Most become monks for the spiritual reasons as well as the physical benefits of the provided food, education, and lodging. Pray that the Kurtop will hear the gospel and follow Jesus, who is calling them “out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).