

The Lord's Exclusive Prayer List

The final hours of our Lord's earthly ministry were swiftly winding down. It would not be long until His excruciating and painful death at Calvary. The Gospel of John records the Passover meal in chapter thirteen. It seems a solemn, even somber event. After foretelling the pending betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter, the following chapters record multiple promises that the Lord generously gives to the few men left from the masses that once followed Him.

While chapters fourteen through sixteen record the promises, it's in chapter seventeen where the Lord closes His evening discourse with a short prayer list that has long fascinated me. Gethsemane's prayer will be later that night, but for now the Lord's closing prayer has only three main requests.

First, the Lord prays for Himself. "Father, the hour is come..." He begins. Our Lord prays a prayer of glorification that perhaps only He could pray.

Second, the Lord prays for His disciples. This is the portion of His prayer that has never ceased to amaze me. Jesus purposely avoids praying for the world and specifically prays for the few that remain submitted to Him:

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. - John 17:9

Jesus prays for their preservation. He prays for His joy to be fulfilled in them. He prays for them to be kept from evil and for their sanctification. Then He prays for their commission to the world.

Lastly, Jesus extends this prayer for His disciples to include all of His future disciples:

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. - John 17:20-23

It's awe-striking that Jesus, in His final hours before the agony of the cross, thought of us. He was thinking of you and me as believers in His heart's desire for us to be one.

Jesus exclusively prays for Himself, His disciples and those of us who would believe on Him through their word. It's an amazingly specific, concise and exclusive prayer list.

Given the current times, I sincerely wonder how the Lord would want us to pray today in this hour?

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