

On Mission Together

PRAY FOR 30 DAYS PRAYER GUIDE

Introduction

People often ask what I believe is the most pressing issue facing the American church and its ability to impact lostness. I always answer by saying that the greatest challenge facing us is the lack of a vital spiritual life of Christ in believers and churches. Two indicators point to this reality.

The first indicator is the waning of the manifest presence and power of God at work through believers, churches and in most communities across our state and nation. The majority of churches in America are either dying, declining and/or plateaued. The power of Christ and His Spirit is being quenched and is not often sensed or experienced in many churches or communities. Believers seem to be content with a lack of the manifestation of God in the midst of their worship services and in individual lives. I dare say that very few personal, family and church altars in America are wet with the tears of believers who are broken over the spiritual famine in their own lives, families, communities, states, nation and world.

The second indicator is the lack of a rapid running of the gospel in most communities across America. There is no denying the fact that the church is having less and less impact on the culture. In fact, the opposite is true. Sin, darkness and evil are increasing every day in our communities and in many churches. However, as moral and spiritual famine accelerates, it will not be long until we cross the tipping point and move closer toward a total moral and spiritual collapse — becoming a totally pagan society. Some even say that is already taking place. Either way, this reality is tragic indeed, especially if this present generation becomes known in history as the generation that lost America to paganism.

God Is Not Pleased

These indicators point to one glaring fact related to God and His people in America: God is not pleased with His people, the American church, and our nation as a whole. We have sinned against our great God and He cannot bless a sinful and disobedient people unless we truly repent. In essence, the American church has embraced the sinful ways of the culture and departed from her first love (Revelation 2:4). In doing this, we are diminishing our ability to shine the light of Christ in our world and stand in jeopardy of Christ removing our lampstand unless we repent and return to Him (Revelation 2:5). As the manifest presence of God wanes, growing evidence of God's judgment on our sinful and rebellious state takes place as evil and darkness increase and God turns us over to ourselves and our own self-demise (Romans 1:18-31). In order to address the lack of the vital spiritual life in the church, we must begin to long for God's mercy, humble ourselves before Him, pray, seek His face, repent and turn from our wicked ways so that He can hear from heaven, forgive our sins and heal our churches and our land (Psalm 147:11; 2 Chronicles 7:14). May this returning to God begin in my heart, family, church, community, state, and nation.

Praying for God's Mercy

Throughout history, God has responded to the desperate prayers of His people for forgiveness and mercy through seasons of revival and spiritual awakening. In fact, both biblically and historically speaking, God has used such seasons to rekindle the missional vitality of His church and to invite the church to join Him in advancing His redemptive work in the world.

This has certainly taken place before in America as God has poured out His mercy through revival and spiritual awakening at least four times in response to the prayers of His people. These movements, the First Great Awakening (1732-1767), the Second Great Awakening (1787-1843), the Layman's Prayer Revival (1857-1859), and the decade of worldwide awakening (1901-1910) were all pervasive and were all preceded by periods of great moral and spiritual decline. Since that time, America has only seen regional and/or seasonal or short-lived movements of revival and spiritual awakening like the Jesus Movement (1970-1973).

As noted, those seasons of revival and spiritual awakening were all preceded and permeated with desperate prayer for God and His mercy. Believers in those days focused their praying on God's kingdom and His purposes. Their dependence on God was seen through their determination to pray always and pray first (1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1). They knew that the Lord was their only hope and help during such great spiritual decline. Spiritual famine and the need for the church to be on mission together is only addressed through spiritual power as God's Spirit is unleashed when His righteous people pray and seek Him with all their hearts (James 5:16; Zech

4:6). May we truly unite our hearts together in the days ahead toward that end.

This Devotional

These devotions with prayer points are intended to assist believers and churches as they seek Christ personally and corporately for revival and spiritual awakening. The biblical basis for this year's devotional title and theme is "On Mission Together," and is taken from John 17:23 where Jesus prays for "oneness" for His followers as they are on mission.

This year's devotional has three sections. Each section highlights a prayer principle related to God's invitation to experience Him through revival and spiritual awakening. John 17:1-5 provides the biblical backdrop for section one and focuses on praying toward the Father. John 17:11-19 provides the biblical basis for section two and focuses on praying toward holiness. Section three is based on John 17:20-26 and focuses on praying toward the mission. As we unite in the following Scripture passages, devotional thoughts and prayer points, may our prayer be, "Oh Lord, will you begin a work of revival and spiritual awakening in my heart, my family, my church, my state, my nation and in our world today?"

Section 1

PRAYING TOWARD THE FATHER

Revival and spiritual awakening always starts with God and the fulfillment of His sovereign kingdom purposes. The same is true concerning revival praying. It begins with God. Often believers begin praying for God to work in their midst and they ask Him to get on board with their agenda. Man-centered prayer will never move the heart of God toward fulfillment of His kingdom purposes. That's why when His people pray toward revival and spiritual awakening, their praying must focus on the Father and His kingdom purposes. In this section, we will examine Jesus' focus on the Father and His kingdom purposes in John 17:1-5.

John 17:1

“Jesus...lifted up His eyes to heaven”

Day 1

#OnMissionTogether

WHERE'S YOUR GAZE?

Once, when I was playing baseball in junior high school, I was on second base as a base runner. When the pitcher pitched the ball I would take decent lead off the base toward third base. At times, when I would venture too far, the pitcher would throw the ball to the shortstop or second baseman to keep me from getting too much of a lead from second base.

This particular day, a storm was brewing on the horizon. I must confess, I was distracted and focused more on the approaching clouds than on being on the lookout for the pitchers throw to keep me close to the base. Then the shortstop came over and said, “Wow, there’s a bad storm coming.” I looked up and stared at the clouds and said, “Yes, it looks like it’s about to storm.” About that time, I heard the shortstop’s glove pop with the ball the pitcher had thrown to get me out. I was caught gazing toward the clouds and not toward the pitcher and I was tagged out. Needless to say, my coach was not too pleased. My gaze was on the wrong thing.

In John 17:1, which is the last chapter of the farewell discourse of Jesus in John 13-17,

Scripture says that Jesus “lifted His eyes to heaven.” His gaze was certainly not on His present or even approaching circumstances. In other words, He was going to be betrayed by one of His close followers, He would be beaten, humiliated and suffer a cruel death on the cross. He would suffer for the sins of the world at the hand of His Father, but His eyes were on His Father in heaven.

This is significant and two truths stand out related to this verse and a believer’s gaze in prayer. First, it shows that Jesus was devoted to keeping His eyes and focus on the Father no matter what took place around Him. He would not allow the present circumstances to distract or keep Him from focusing His

John 17:1

“Jesus...said... Father.”

Day 2

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A VITAL SPIRITUAL LIFE

One of the great blessings believers have in life is to be around more seasoned and experienced believers in the faith. Through the years, I have been so blessed to have many seasoned saints who have invested in my journey as a follower of Jesus. In more recent years, God has allowed me the privilege to learn from a very seasoned man of prayer. His walk with God is so vital and alive, even at the age of 96.

Fred Lunsford, a 96-year-old World War II veteran, retired pastor and associational missionary has a very vital and real walk with Jesus. When he prays, it is as if he is in the presence of his heavenly Father. His words are so genuine, and he will say things like “God, you are so close and real. I feel your presence here with me. Thank you Father, well glory!” When you hear him pray, you know that his intimacy with God did not just happen but comes from a life of walking with the Father. Fred Lunsford’s life of prayer is truly focused on a vital and intimate walk with Jesus.

In John 17:1, Jesus begins His high priestly prayer with the word “Father.” The use of this

term points to the truth that intimacy and relationship are central to Jesus and His walk with the Father. It also shows that prayer is rooted in an intimate and vital relationship that Jesus has with God, His Father. His Father is not some unknown god or deity in the heavens. He is His “Father,” one whom Jesus knows personally and is intimately connected to.

Since “Father” is used six times in John 17, intimacy and relationship threads are woven throughout the entire John 17 prayer. This devotion to a vital and intimate relationship with the Father by Jesus challenges us as believers to always make prayer about the Father more than lists, wants and even ourselves.

John 17:1

“The hour has come.”

Day 3

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GOD’S HOUR

If anyone knows about God’s hour, it is Delos Miles. When Miles was 15, he enlisted in the Army during the Korean War. His unit was assigned to the front lines when the Chinese Red Army entered the war to assist the North Koreans. Their massive build-up of troops near the Chosin Reservoir allowed the Chinese to overrun the U.S. forces and their positions. Because of that, Delos Miles found himself in a foxhole with all of his fellow soldiers dead around him. As the Chinese overran their position, Miles threw himself in the back of the foxhole to play dead.

Within minutes, a Chinese soldier jumped in the foxhole shooting. Miles was not hit anywhere but his little finger. The Chinese soldier then turned Miles over and put the AK-47 barrel to Miles’ forehead. In that moment, Delos Miles silently cried out to God in repentance and told God if He would spare his life, he would serve Him for the rest of his life. He knew that this moment was in God’s hands — he would live or die in that foxhole based upon God’s purpose for His life. This was God’s hour for God to work out His eternal purposes in Miles’ life.

Miraculously, when the Chinese soldier pulled the trigger, the bullet did not enter Miles’ head but rather ricocheted around his head and ear. It did not even knock him out. God spared his life. It was not God’s hour for Delos Miles to die. But it was God’s hour for Miles to begin his journey of experiencing God’s purposes being worked out through his life. Miles eventually made it back safely to the American lines and fulfilled his promise to God. He became a pastor, evangelism leader for his denomination, and eventually a seminary professor.

In today’s verse, Jesus prays toward God’s “hour.” The term “hour” represents God’s opportune time and points to Jesus’ understanding of the Father’s eternal purposes that are being accomplished

John 17:1

“Jesus...said, Father...the hour has come.”

Day 4

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GOD’S TIMING IS PERFECT

When God moved in America during the decade of worldwide awakening (1901-1910), the evidence of God’s perfect timing was seen throughout many states where churches were waning in their spiritual vitality and commitment to the mission. As God began to move, prayer gatherings were at the heart of these movements. These gatherings sprang up spontaneously in communities, on college campuses and in churches.

One such gathering was at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago where 300-400 people would gather every Saturday night to pray for a worldwide revival. R.A. Torrey, the president at Moody, and some of his associates, would often meet after these meetings to continue praying for God’s Spirit to work. In one such meeting, Torrey cried out that God would send him around the world preaching the gospel. That prayer was eventually answered as Torrey was soon invited to come to Australia to begin a series of revivals and crusades across the nation. This was the beginning of Torrey’s worldwide campaign which saw hundreds of thousands of converts to Christ. God’s time for Torrey’s ministry had come to fruition at

just the right time, during the start of the Worldwide Awakening of 1901-1910.

In today’s text, Jesus prayed to the Father concerning the fullness of God’s hour (or timing) in His life. This was when history was ripe for the Messiah to come, fulfill and then bring to a conclusion His earthly ministry. The use of the term “has come” describes a moment in time when God reaches into chronological time to accomplish His redemptive and holy purposes. Only God can do this. This divine appointment for Jesus to complete His mission by going to the cross had now reached its climax in God’s perfect time and way.

Jesus was sensitive to the Father’s timing while the Father worked out His eternal purposes through His life. His

John 17:1
“Glorify Your Son”

Day 5

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IT'S ALL ABOUT JESUS

A number of years ago, while serving at the North American Mission Board in the office of prayer, I was invited to attend an inter-denominational evangelism roundtable on the role of prayer in evangelism. The meeting was sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association at Wheaton College. The room was filled with seminary professors, parachurch leaders, denominational leaders and prayer practitioners. There were a number of people there who were giants in prayer, revival and evangelism in the evangelical world and I was really eager to learn from these spiritual leaders.

One such leader and practitioner was Evelyn Christenson — a prolific writer on prayer and a true woman of God. The group discussions were heated and intense at times as leaders spoke with great passion, expertise and experience regarding the role of prayer in the evangelistic mission. Then, at a pivotal moment when the group was looking for a word that could bring them together in their concluding thoughts and statements, Evelyn Christenson stood up and spoke. She said something like this: “I am certainly not the most educated

or spiritual person in this room, but it seems to me that we need to get back to this basic truth as we link prayer with evangelism.” The room went silent for a moment as she paused. She continued, “We must make our praying and our evangelism all about Jesus.” Then the room erupted in amens, applause and affirmations.

In today's text, Jesus prays for His glorification. Glorification is a rich concept in the book of John and refers to the giving of proper esteem, position and honor. However, at the heart of Jesus' request that the Father “glorify” Him is a much different understanding than what is usually meant when someone is exalted or given the proper esteem he deserves as a leader. “Glorify” in this context is an intense,

John 17:1

“That Your Son also may glorify You.”

Day 6

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PLEASING THE FATHER THROUGH PRAYER

Tied to the glorification/exaltation of Jesus and the Father are the three “lifted up” sayings of Jesus in John’s gospel (John 3:14-15; John 8:28; John 12:32). The Father is glorified as the Son is lifted up on the cross, out of the grave and to the right hand of the Father where He sits eternally to make intercession for those who believe (Hebrews 7:25). Three truths surface from this prayer of Jesus in verse one.

First, the Father is made known and glorified as Jesus obeys the Father and is lifted up on the cross. In John 3:14-15, Jesus compares the cross event to the foreshadowing of the same found in Numbers 21. In Numbers 21, the lifting up of the bronze serpent on a standard by Moses provided a way for the Israelites to be saved from death when bitten by the fiery serpents. Likewise, Jesus *must* (which is a divine imperative) be lifted up on the cross so that “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life,” (John 3:15).

Second, in John 8:28-29 Jesus prayed toward the lifting up of Himself out of the grave. Notice His words, “When you lift up the Son of Man then you (his followers) will know that

I am He (the Messiah), and that I do nothing of Myself but as the Father taught me... for I always do those things that please Him.” Jesus was praying toward the Father’s glorification through His resurrection. That was the moment when His followers began to truly realize that Jesus was really who He said He was — the Messiah.

Third, When Jesus prayed toward being lifted up in John 12:32, He was praying toward the cross, resurrection and His exaltation (ascension). When Jesus was lifted to the right hand of the Father (which is also what He prayed toward in John 17:5), the Spirit was sent and began His work of drawing all people to the Father through the Son (John 12:32; 16:8). As Jesus

was glorified, the lost world was redeemed and the Father was ultimately made known and glorified. This is at the heart of our Savior's prayer. He therefore wanted to please His Father as He prayed. Can the same thing be said of our praying?

My father figure growing up was my maternal grandfather. In his youth, he was an accomplished baseball player. He was especially known for hitting home runs. Once, while I was playing Little League Baseball, I was intent on pleasing my grandfather by attempting to hit a home run. So, as the pitcher pitched, I swung for the fence. On my third swing, I connected with a solid hit. As the ball was going over the fence, the centerfielder reached up over the fence and caught the ball. I was heartbroken because I wanted to please and make my grandfather proud by hitting a home run. After the game, he assured me that he was proud of me and was honored that I wanted to be like him and please him.

In today's text, the whole purpose of Jesus' prayer for His glorification was to please and glorify His Father. As Christians, we often try to make the cross about us and God's desire to save us. Yet, the cross is first and foremost about Jesus' desire to obey and please His Father. The cross is God-centered, not man-centered. Jesus wanted God the Father to receive all the glory and honor as He prayed, obeyed and lived a sacrificial life. Can that be said of us?

PRAYER

- *Lord, may my prayers please and honor You.*

PROMPTS

- *Father, help my church pray in a way that will exalt Your name.*

**PRAYER
NOTES**

John 17:2

**“As you have given Him authority over all flesh,
that He should give eternal life...”**

Day 7

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THE FATHER’S GIFT

John “Praying” Hyde’s earthly father, Smith Hyde, was a godly pastor and father of six. Smith Hyde was also a Presbyterian minister who believed in leading his church and his family in prayer. Early on, Hyde heard his father praying for God to raise up laborers for the harvest fields from the pulpit. But it was the gift of his father’s daily commitment to family prayer that left the deepest mark on Hyde’s life of intercession. This gift of prayer eventually produced much fruit for the kingdom through Hyde’s service and intercession for the Punjab people in India.

Hyde’s intercession for his classmates while in seminary is often seen as one of his greatest gifts to missions during that day. Once Hyde surrendered to missions while in seminary, he started taking his classmates on one-on-one prayer walks across campus to encourage their openness to missions. He would then commit to pray for those that seemed open. Soon twenty six classmates surrendered to the Lord to be involved in overseas missions.

In John 17:2, Jesus prayed specifically toward the “gift” of eternal life that the Father had given Him. This gift was the direct result of the

Father’s glorification as Jesus obeyed the Father and went to the cross, was resurrected from the dead, and ascended to the right hand of God where He eternally sits, interceding for the saints (Hebrews 7:25).

Because the Father was exalted and glorified by Jesus through obedience, Jesus was given “all” the Father’s “authority,” or ruling power and jurisdiction, to give eternal life to “all flesh.” Because of this gift, Jesus then prayed toward God’s purposes being accomplished as He fulfilled His mission to be His Father’s instrument of eternal life to as many people as the Father had “given” Him. Thus, Jesus interceded on behalf of those without eternal life.

Through intercession, the gift of eternal life flowed from the

John 17:3

“And this is Eternal Life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Day 8

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PRAYING TOWARD ETERNAL LIFE

God’s gift of eternal life is central to true revival praying. Charles Finney believed this to be the case. Because of this, Finney and his writings were instrumental in challenging, inspiring, and equipping believers toward a spirit of prevailing prayer toward eternal life that preceded, permeated, and followed his crusades during the Second Great Awakening in America (1787-1843). Many of his campaigns were also used by God to raise up prayer groups before and during the Layman’s Prayer Revival of 1857-59 in which over 1 million people were converted to Christ.

Finney not only promoted personal prevailing prayer but challenged unified prayer through groups and prayer gatherings. College campuses, communities and cities where Finney visited were set ablaze with prayer groups who practiced prevailing prayer for revival. Everywhere Finney went, people were challenged to gather to pray toward genuine repentance, personal and corporate renewal and the conversion of the lost. Finney was a true champion of prayer toward the giving of eternal life.

In John 17:3, Jesus focused His praying on the giving of eternal life. As Jesus prayed, He presented a simple definition of eternal life. First, eternal life is about knowing the “only true God.” The term “know” refers to an intimate relationship that is grounded in personal experience. This personal experience is not based on hearsay, neither is it with pagan gods who must be appeased as the Gentiles believed. It is with God who is the only authentic and genuine God of all creation (Psalm 104). He can be known intimately by those who believe and are given eternal life through Jesus.

Second, since Jesus was the one who the Father “sent,” and was always careful to do what the Father desired, He is validated in His oneness

John 17:4

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given Me to do.”

Day 9

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HAVE YOU BEEN TO THE GARDEN?

In John 17:4, Jesus is looking and praying toward the glorification of the Father through His passion (death, burial, resurrection and ascension) and refers to His passion as something He has already accomplished. Yet, in real time, Jesus had not been to the cross at this point in His journey. The question then arises — how could Jesus pray “I have glorified” and “I have finished the work” if He had not been to the cross?

The answer is found in John 12:23-32, which is the Johannine version of Jesus’ Gethsemane prayer found in Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42 and Luke 22:39-46. In the Gethsemane prayers, Jesus prayed toward the fulfillment of the Father’s purposes through passionate, desperate prayer and literally surrendered to the Father’s eternal glorification and purposes through the cross, resurrection and ascension.

In His Gethsemane prayer, Jesus cried out in agony for the Father to take the cup of His suffering and death for the sins of the world from Him if possible. But He then died to His own desires and self when He prayed, “Father...nevertheless not My will, but Yours

be done” (Luke 22:42). In John 12:27-28, Jesus prayed toward the same outcome when He prayed “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour?’ But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.” This prayer of surrender and death to self is why Jesus could pray in John 17:4 that He had already finished and glorified the Father through his completion of the Father’s assignment and mission of redemption while on earth. This highlights two truths related to believers and praying to the Father for revival.

First, there will always come a point when, as a believer, we will have to die to self as we pray toward the Father’s will through revival, spiritual

John 17:5

“And now, O Father, glorify me together with Yourself..”

Day 10

#OnMissionTogether

WHERE'S YOUR PLACE OF PRAYER?

Recently I journeyed with some pastors and leaders from across North Carolina to pray in a number of special places of prayer in the western part of the state near Hayesville and Marble, N.C. All of these places were special locations where many people have gathered together through the years to pray, but two locations were especially a highlight.

The first was a mountain laurel thicket where Uncle Doc Barker and other pastors through the years prayed as they traveled by foot, horseback or buggy to preaching assignments. In the year of 1930, it was in this spot that 5-year-old Fred Lunsford overheard Barker pray, “Lord, I’d rather die in this thicket than be a powerless preacher.” The second place was the location where Southern Baptist statesman George W. Truett’s mother prayed daily under a hickory tree for her son and her family. Local pastors and leaders also prayed in that same place in 1952 for God to raise up a camp on the adjacent hillside. God answered the next year as Truett Conference Center and Camp was birthed. God was truly near in those special places of prayer.

In today’s verse, Jesus is longing for the Father and His intimacy through His ascension as the pre-incarnate, existent Christ. Jesus’ intimacy with the Father on earth was demonstrated by His continual life of prayer and devotion to meet with the Father in His favorite place of prayer — the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 1:35; Luke 22:39). Yet, in His prayer in John 17:4-5, it is evident that He longs for the joy of His eternal, uninterrupted fellowship, communion and pre-existent state with the Father through His ascension to the Father, which He surrendered in His incarnation (Philippians 2:5-11).

What does this teach us about prayer and the Father as we pray toward revival?

First, it teaches us the importance of a place of prayer where we can meet with the Father in intimacy and experience His manifest holy nearness on a regular basis. Jesus Himself, Uncle Doc Barker, George Truett’s mother and believers throughout history have demonstrated the importance of having a place set aside to meet with God.

Second, it is not only important to have a physical place to meet with God, but it is most important that believers encounter God intimately in that place. This is what Moses described in Psalm 91:1 as the “secret place of the Most High.” Moses described the secret place as a place in which one must dwell or remain. This is similar to Paul’s exhortation in I Thessalonians 5:17, “Pray without ceasing.”

The “secret place” represents a private, personal, hide-away place that is safe, secure and a refuge for the soul. It is a place that only the individual believer can go with God — a secret place of intimacy and presence that believers experience with God. This is all made possible through the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus (Hebrews 10:19-25). Do you have a secret place of prayer where you regularly meet with God in intimacy? If not, God is waiting there for you.

PRAYER

PROMPTS

- *Father, forgive me for often neglecting my “place of prayer.”*
- *Lord, make our church a “place of prayer” for the nations.*

PRAYER NOTES

Section 2

At the heart and soul of genuine revival is a spirit of repentance and personal holiness. In other words, the very idea of revival and spiritual awakening cannot be understood apart from believers returning to the Lord through sincere repentance and commitment to a life of personal holiness. The presence of sin and a lack of holiness quenches God's Spirit and His work in and through any believer. Jesus knew that the character of a believer impacts their ability to experience God's favor, nearness and fruitfulness. That's why Jesus prayed in John 17:6-19 for His disciples to be holy and set apart in their character. Revival praying that leads to missional progress through spiritual awakening should always include prayer toward personal holiness and Christ-like character.

John 17:6

“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world...and they have kept Your word.”

Day 11

#OnMissionTogether

ARE YOU KEEPING GOD'S WORD?

Personal revival never comes without a commitment to keeping and obeying the Word of God. Timothy Dwight, a grandson of Jonathan Edwards, is a testimony to the importance of God's Word and revival. Dwight was a pastor when, in 1795, he was chosen as the new president of Yale College. The college was struggling and only had a little over 100 students, most of whom were not believers or were struggling in a shallow Christian experience. Infidelity and licentiousness were rampant.

Dwight's strategy toward revival and change was threefold. First, he would live a life of integrity and devotion to obey God and His Word before the students and faculty. Second, he would prayerfully preach God's Word in class and in chapel. Third, he would energetically encourage open dialogue and prayer concerning spiritual life with all his students.

Soon, the atmosphere and the spiritual thermometer on campus began to change. Dwight then began to teach and preach on the question, "Is the Bible the Word of God?"

As a result, students began to gather in prayer meetings and extended discussions on conversion as God's Spirit began to work mightily on campus. Revival soon swept the campus, first in 1802 and then again in 1808, 1813 and 1815. These campus revivals also spread into the surrounding communities and were influential in the revival movement that swept across Connecticut during the Second Great Awakening.

In today's verse, Jesus testified concerning two things related to His disciples which the Father had given Him. First, they were recipients of the manifest presence of the Father through His "name." "Manifested" is used here to describe making something known that was previously

hidden or unknown. “Name” represents God’s whole person, His character and nature. Thus, because they had seen and experienced Jesus as He taught, ministered and lived among them, they had seen and experienced the Father (John 1:1-18).

Second, the disciples whom the Father had given Jesus were faithful to “keep” the Father’s Word. “Keep” refers to watchful care and possession or ownership of something. Because they were faithful to the revelation of the Father, Jesus now commends their perseverance to “keep,” the Father’s Word. This also refers to their obedience, and now sets them apart as faithful followers of Jesus. Since Jesus was faithful to “keep” the Father’s Word (John 8:55), these disciples were identified with Jesus as His disciples. They, like Jesus, had obeyed and kept the Father’s Word which will now result in God’s redemptive purposes being accomplished as they join His mission and make Jesus known to the world.

Can it be said of you and your church that you have kept or obeyed the Father’s Word? Personal holiness and revival always flow out of a life that is being, doing, telling and keeping God’s Word.

PRAYER

- *Father, help me to keep Your Word.*

PROMPTS

- *Lord, may my church be a testimony to Your Word in our world.*

**PRAYER
NOTES**

John 17:8

“For I have given to them the words which You have given me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.”

Day 12

#OnMissionTogether

ARE YOU “ALL IN” WITH JESUS?

In today's text, Jesus prays for His disciples and their belief that He was indeed who He said He was. Jesus is thus testifying in His prayer that His disciples had now moved from being timid followers to being “all in” with Jesus and His mission (John 17:7). What did this “all in” life of holiness and mission mean for Jesus' disciples? Jesus prayed toward three realities for those who are “all in” with Him and His divinely-given mission.

First, they “received” the words and truths that the Father gave to Jesus. “Received” actually means to take and make one's own. They not only believed the words but took them to heart to be the revealed truth of God and divinely inspired message from God through Jesus. This allowed the disciples to keep and obey Jesus and His words (John 17:6). Because of this, they were unlike many of the religious leaders of the day who rejected Jesus and His message (John 7:40-52; 10:19-39; 12:42-43).

Second, they “knew” that Jesus came from the Father. Jesus' words in the temple had finally gained traction in their hearts (John 7:28-29; 16:30-33). This understanding that Jesus is of divine origin was essential if Jesus' disciples

were to be instruments in God's hand to make Him known to the nations.

Third, He prayed toward their belief that the Father had sent Him on mission. Jesus was the Christ, sent by the Father to give eternal life and rescue people from their sins (Matthew 1:21; John 6:66-71; 17:2-3). This prayer was for His followers to become disciples who were on mission because they believed Jesus was sent and was likewise sending them (John 20:21).

In essence, Jesus is praying toward His disciples being faithful followers who are “all in” with Him in relationship and mission. If they were going to impact a pagan world, Jesus knew that these Christ-like qualities had to be possessed by each one. They had to be disciples who, like Jesus, had

John 17:9

“I Pray for them...”

Day 13

#OnMissionTogether

THE PRAYERS OF ONE

Do you believe that one person's prayers can make a difference? Jerome Savonarola (1452-1498) believed that his prayers could make a difference and help spark revival and spiritual awakening in Florence, Italy. Savonarola was greatly disturbed by the injustice, immorality and corruption that existed among the general population and in many leaders of the Catholic church. This led to long hours of passionate intercession by Savonarola. He would often walk along the river in Florence and weep as he prayed for the people in the city. He was often found weeping and praying on the steps of the altar in the church.

Soon God began to hear Savonarola's cries as God's Spirit began to bring deep conviction upon wayward believers, church leaders and the lost. Revival soon came and the city was ablaze as a haven of moral and spiritual vitality from 1496-1498. Soon, as is often the case, the corrupt religious elite became outraged with the great numbers of salvations and the moral changes that revival brought to the city and beyond, and Savonarola and two companions

were hanged and burned in the public square.

In John 17:9, Jesus prayed for His disciples. Four truths surface from His prayer in this text. First, Jesus' act of prayer showed that He believed prayer could make an eternal difference in how Christian witnesses live their lives and fulfill their role as His ambassadors in the lost world. Thus, He committed their lives and mission to the Father as He depended on His Father in prayer. Second, the use of this particular term “pray” shows that Jesus prayed regularly and from an intimate and unique position with the One He was asking on behalf of His disciples. Jesus models that prayer must always flow out of one's vital relationship with the Father.

Jesus is therefore praying from His relationship with the Father as the Son of God, Eternal Advocate and Great High Priest.

Third, the force of the term “pray” demonstrates that Jesus was earnestly seeking and entreating the Father on behalf of His disciples. Jesus was passionate about asking for the Father’s intervention and help for His disciples who would take His message to the lost world. Fourth, Jesus’ use of this term points toward the fact that Jesus prayed specific prayers for specific things on behalf of His disciples and those who would later believe through their witness (e.g., John 17:11, 15, 17, 21, 24). Jesus knew that His disciples were dependent on the Father’s help to walk in holiness and faithfulness to the mission as His witnesses.

Jesus and believers like Jerome Savonarola demonstrate to us that earnest, specific, passionate prayers that flow out of a believer who is walking with the Father can make an eternal difference toward revival and spiritual awakening in our world. What will you do?

**PRAYER
PROMPTS**

- *Lord, may my prayers flow out of a revived life of intimacy and passion for You and the advancement of Your Kingdom.*
- *Father, help our church become dependent upon You in prayer.*

**PRAYER
NOTES**

John 17:9-10

“I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, For they are Yours...and I am glorified in them.”

Day 14

#OnMissionTogether

PRAYING SPECIFICALLY FOR BELIEVERS

Today's text presents two truths related to prayer for believers that are essential if we are to see the church revived. First, there are times when believers need to focus their prayers specifically on one another. Jesus made it very clear in this text that His prayers were not for the world but instead for His disciples whom the Father had given Him (John 17:9).

Jesus was not suggesting here that believers should never pray for the lost or for the world. The Bible is clear that prayers on behalf of the lost and the world should be a part of every Christian's life (Psalm 126:5-6; Matthew 6:9-10; Romans 10:1-2; 1 Timothy 2:1-4). However, what Jesus' prayer illustrates is that there is often a need for believers to focus their prayers on specific spiritual needs related to the growth and maturity of the body of Christ for the sake of the fulfillment of Christ's mission. Paul's intercessory prayers also point to this truth (e.g., Ephesians 1:15-21; 3:13-21; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13).

Second, Jesus makes it clear that His glorification is tied to the disciples whom the Father had given Him. Thus, it is imperative

that Jesus' followers walk in Christ-like character and live holy lives as witnesses to Him and His resurrection. When believers are prayed for and they fulfill their calling and mission, Jesus is "glorified," which ultimately brings glory to the Father, which is a direct answer to Jesus' prayer in John 17:1.

While on his way to the mission field in 1892, after he boarded the ship for India, John "Praying" Hyde was given a note by one of his father's personal friends. The note was short but made an everlasting impact on Hyde. In fact, it initially made him angry. It read something like this, "I will not cease praying for you until you are filled with the Holy Spirit."

At first reading, the note cut deep into Hyde's heart and pride. Then, as Hyde earnestly prayed and surrendered to God, God finally gave him the victory over the sin of pride that so easily beset him. The faithful prayers of his father's friend bore eternal fruit as Hyde went on to become known as John "Praying" Hyde. Over a 20 year period, he was instrumental in praying for and experiencing revival and spiritual awakening in the Punjab province of India.

Today, the American church is in trouble because we refuse to return to the Lord in godliness and holiness. Because of this, God is not pleased with His people and is turning us and our country over to our own demise (Romans 1:18-32). In Jesus' day, He knew that His disciples needed God's anointing, sanctification and protection to be empowered to take the gospel to a pagan world. How are you praying for Christians and churches in a time when we desperately need God's mercy through revival and spiritual awakening?

PRAYER PROMPTS

- *Father, teach me to be faithful to ask on behalf of my fellow Christian witnesses in prayer.*
- *Lord, may our church be faithful to pray toward revival in Christians' lives.*

PRAYER NOTES

John 17:11

**“...I come to You. Holy Father, keep through
Your name those whom you have given Me.”**

Day 15

#OnMissionTogether

PRAYING TOWARD CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

A number of years ago I took my family to the movies on a rainy Saturday afternoon. I dropped them off at the door and went to find the closest parking space I could find. It seemed like the whole city was at the movies that day, and I found only one open spot at the very back of the lot. I pulled into the tight spot and quickly opened the door to jump out and scurry to join my family.

When I opened the door of the minivan, a big gust of wind caught the door and slammed it into a very expensive, new sports car that was in the space next to me. When I pulled the door back there was a huge dent and a scratch on the door. At that point I had a decision to make. Would I do the right thing and leave my contact information or would I get in the van and pull to another spot?

Thankfully, I resisted the temptation to move the minivan and did the right thing. Later that evening the phone rang. It was the lady who owned the car. I apologized and assured her that my insurance would cover the damages. She then said, “I was only calling to say thank you for leaving your contact information. Most

people would have simply moved to another spot.” I responded that the reason I did not move my car was because I was a follower of Jesus.

I asked her if she was a believer and she was not, but she asked me to tell her more about being a Christian. I was able to share my testimony and how Christ had changed my life. As we were ending the conversation, she said, “Mr. Schofield, thank you for walking your talk as a Christian — that is refreshing to me.” After we hung up, I prayed for the Lord to bear fruit in her life and thanked the Lord for the courage to do the right thing.

In today’s verse, Jesus’ departure is fast approaching and His burden for His

disciples to remain close in fellowship with Him is great. In essence, with this prayer, Jesus prays specifically for His followers to be holy in their character like the Father (notice the use of “Holy Father”) and kept in His name or character.

The term “keep” refers to the concept of being guarded and relates more in this instance to the idea of being guarded in intimacy through a personal relationship than it does to protection from danger from an outside source. Jesus’ desire for His disciples to live holy lives by being attached to the “True Vine” would ultimately produce hearts that were focused personally and corporately on Jesus’ heart and desires (John 15). Therefore, with this prayer, Jesus demonstrates the importance of being dependent on the Father for a vibrant, real and alive Christian witness.

Today’s pagan culture needs to see genuine Christianity being lived out by Christ followers. This can only take place as the Father “keeps” believers in Jesus’ character and intimacy with Him. When that happens, unbelievers are engaged by real Christians who are walking with a real Savior who can deliver them from the domain of darkness (Col. 1:13-14). Are unbelievers seeing Christ lived out through your life? Is that your prayer?

PRAYER

PROMPTS

- *Father, keep me in Your name and character.*
- *Lord, use our church to pray faithfully for Christians to walk their talk.*

PRAYER

NOTES

John 17:13

“But now I come to You...that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”

Day 16

#OnMissionTogether

ARE YOU JOYFUL IN JESUS?

The joy of Jesus goes much deeper than mere happiness in a Christian's life. John Huss demonstrated this truth throughout his life. Huss (1369-1415), who was a bohemian priest and pastored Prague's Bethlehem Church, was devoted to a holy life and to the proclamation of holy Scripture.

Huss promoted the reading and teaching of the Bible and stood for moral reform among the clergy. He argued that Christ was the head of the church and should be obeyed over any pope who was not standing true to the teachings of the Bible. He was soon portrayed to be an enemy of the church and excommunicated. Huss was eventually arrested and condemned to be burned at the stake if he did not recant his views. As he was being burned at the stake, Huss pleaded for God to have mercy on his enemies and quoted the Psalms. Despite his cruel death, Huss remained joyful and peaceful in Jesus to the very end.

In John 17:13, Jesus prayed for His disciples and their joy. “Joy” refers to the realized awareness or recognized understanding of one's possession of God's favor and grace. The “now” represents a present reality that

would have lasting influence. Jesus had prayed toward this same joy in John 15:11 where He spoke to His disciples so that His joy might “remain” or be present and “full” or complete in each of them. In John 15:11, the purpose of the disciples experiencing the full joy of Jesus relates to their ability to remain attached to Jesus through an intimate relationship and bear much fruit for His kingdom.

The same is true in John 17:13 with one major difference. In John 15:11, Jesus was still present and speaking with the disciples in person. In John 17:13, Jesus was present yet also was praying (“I come to You”) for their future joy, which would be made possible through the coming Holy Spirit when Jesus was no longer with them in bodily

John 17:14-16

***“The world has hated them because they are not of the world...
I do not pray that You should take them out of the world...
They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.”***

Day 17

#OnMissionTogether

IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF THE WORLD

In 1939, Pastor Paul Schneider was the first Protestant minister to be martyred by the Nazis prior to WWII. He was pastor of an evangelical church and through his writings and preaching, Schneider criticized and refused to condone the immorality, hypocrisy and teachings of Hitler and his leaders, as well as the Christians who were standing with the Nazi Party.

Eventually, Schneider began to excommunicate parishioners who embraced Nazi teachings and engaged in a lifestyle that was contrary to Scripture. He was soon arrested and imprisoned. Two months later, he was released with the warning to not return to his church. Despite the fact that his actions would eventually cost him his life, Schneider knew that he must remain faithful to God's Word and obey God and not man. After returning to his church, Schneider began preaching, was arrested, imprisoned and later put to death by lethal injection as an example to all ministers. Obviously, Schneider was hated and despised by Nazi leaders for his belief in God and was willing to pay the ultimate price for standing true to Christ. He was in the world but not of the world.

In today's text, Jesus prayed toward holiness and Christ-like character for His disciples. This meant that His disciples would need to be in the world but not of the world. What would this practically mean for His disciples?

First, Jesus prayed for the hatred that had and would take place toward His disciples from the world. "Hated" means they would be despised or pursued with hatred by the world. It refers to passionate opposition that is encountered by those with opposite beliefs, practices and morals. "World" refers to the world system of beliefs and those who adhere to those beliefs that are contrary to Jesus, His teachings and commands. The "world" therefore stands for those in direct opposition to God and

would include Jewish leaders and the pagan world. Because of this, His disciples should not be surprised by such hatred since they were no longer of the world.

Second, Jesus was not praying that His disciples would be taken out of the world. The disciples were therefore called to the world as Christ's messengers. They were sent to the world as Jesus was sent to the world by the Father (John 29:21).

Third, the disciples were again compared to Jesus. They were His ambassadors and like Him, they were not of the world and would be treated like Jesus was treated. They were holy, set apart and their place of origin had changed because of their relationship with Jesus. They were now born from above and recipients of the kingdom of God (John 3:1-16). They were a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" God's own special people who were called to proclaim His praises (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Because of this, hatred from the world should be expected. Paul understood this truth when he said, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). Are you in the world but not of the world? How are you dealing with being hated or persecuted?

**PRAYER
PROMPTS**

- *Father, help me stand firm when the world hates me because I am different in Jesus.*
- *May my church be a haven of rest for those who are in the world but not of the world.*

**PRAYER
NOTES**

John 17:15

**“I do not pray that You should take them out of the world,
but that You should keep them from the evil one.”**

Day 18

#OnMissionTogether

ARE YOU PRAYING FOR PROTECTION?

Years ago, I sat in the study of a wonderful pastor who was weeping because two young people from his youth group were tragically killed in a car wreck the week before. He was broken-hearted for the family and the loss of these young people. But he was also concerned because both the students and their driver were very intoxicated, though they were from great Christian homes and were at one time leaders in the youth group. The pastor asked me how that could happen and he said, “What were they thinking and why did they succumb to the temptation to drink and drive?” He then said, “What can we do as a church to ensure that this never happens again?”

I assured him that it was impossible to be sure that it would never happen again because believers sometimes make bad choices with disastrous consequences. I also told him that the church could pray for their protection from the evil one and his temptations. He responded, with tears running down his cheeks, “That’s the problem. We really have not been praying in a concerted way for our young people or for one another as Christians.

In fact, as a pastor, I have not led our church to pray as I should. But that is going to change.” From that day forward things did change.

In today’s text, Jesus prayed specifically for His followers to be kept from the “evil one” (John 17:15). He knew that protection from Satan’s deceptions and wiles can only take place through the Father. Jesus was departing soon and was concerned that His witnesses would fall into temptation and destroy their witness to the world. Jesus knew that Satan is a thief who is out to steal, kill and destroy every believer’s joy and witness. This prayer again shows just how much Jesus depended on the Father through prayer. Jesus understood that His disciples would fail in living a holy life if

their ability to overcome evil was dependent on their own wisdom and strength.

It is interesting that Jesus teaches His followers to pray for protection from the evil one in Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4. He also prays the same thing in John 17:15. This is evidently a very important prayer that believers should faithfully pray for one another. I am convinced that today in America, the mission creeps forward because many Christians are being taunted, oppressed, deceived, and their witness is being destroyed by the enemy and his flaming arrows. Living a godly life in holiness cannot take place apart from the work of God's Spirit. Spiritual warfare is a real part of a Christian's experience and prayer is key to a believer's ability to successfully say "no" to Satan's temptations.

Often, believers and churches wait until families are falling apart or children are wayward before they pray. Jesus, by praying for His disciples and their protection from Satan, is modeling proactive prayer instead of reactive prayer. He prayed on their behalf as they were sent into the world as His witnesses. Are you and your church praying proactive prayers for God's protection from the evil one for yourself and for other believers? If not, why?

PRAYER PROMPTS

- *Father, forgive my neglect of proactive prayer for protection from the evil one.*
- *Lord, teach my church the seriousness of proactive spiritual warfare prayer for protection from the evil one.*

PRAYER NOTES

John 17:17

“Sanctify them by Your truth, Your Word is truth.”

Day 19

#OnMissionTogether

SET APART AND SANCTIFIED

Sanctification was a big deal to Samuel Stoddard, who pastored the Northampton First Church, a puritan congregation, from 1669 until his death in 1729. Stoddard, who was Jonathan Edwards' grandfather, was instrumental in paving the way for God to move through revival and spiritual awakening during the First Great Awakening in the Connecticut River Valley. Stoddard was a faithful pastor, who believed in a definite conversion experience and a changed life through sanctification. He preached these truths with great passion and heartfelt desire to see his congregation and the lost drawn to Jesus.

Stoddard believed people were stirred toward conversion and consecration as the minister preached right doctrine through the faithful exposition of God's Word. It was his belief that God's Word would work in conjunction with the Holy Spirit to crush human pride and bring people to humble themselves before God in conviction of sin. This would eventually lead them toward eternal salvation and sanctification in Christ. Stoddard was also convinced that when minister and congregants

both were faithful to their calling to Christ through genuine conversion and a set apart life, the congregation was ripe for revival. Although Stoddard did not see revival come, his grandson, Jonathan Edwards, and the church as a whole did experience revival during the First Great Awakening (1732-1767).

In John 17:17, Jesus prays specifically for His followers to be sanctified or set apart in His Word or truth. “Sanctify” literally means to make holy, set apart or separate someone as righteous or godly for the service of God. If Jesus' disciples were to be holy and have Christ's character, their lives would need to be shaped and directed by Jesus, the eternal Word of God. Thus, Jesus prayed specifically for their

personal sanctification, which could only take place through the supernatural presence and power of God’s Spirit at work in their lives, which allowed them to live in the world but not be of the world.

“Truth” in John’s gospel is usually representative of the revelation of God in Jesus. “Truth” is therefore equated in this text to the “eternal logos” or Word of God and the living, incarnate and risen Christ who, by His own declaration, is, “...the way, the truth and the life” (John 1:1-18; John 14:6). Even so, with this prayer, Jesus prayed that His disciples would not only embrace the idea of being holy and set apart through faith, but would also surrender to the reality of the holy life being worked out daily through their lives while they were in the world.

This prayer for sanctification was therefore a prayer that His followers would encounter the truth of God in Jesus and in His Word. These encounters, if embraced and embodied, would then lead to a life of radical obedience to the truth. Thus, when Jesus prayed that His disciples would be different or set apart in the truth of God, it was for the expressed purpose that the pagan world would witness their authentic faith and believe that Jesus is the one who could give them eternal life. Are you praying toward being sanctified in the truth of God?

**PRAYER
PROMPTS**

- *Lord, teach me to pray toward sanctification in my life and in my church.*
- *Father, may my church become ripe for revival through sanctified lives in Christ.*

**PRAYER
NOTES**

John 17:18-19

“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.”

Day 20

#OnMissionTogether

SET APART AND SENT

Jesus makes reference to His own sanctification in John 17:19. There is nothing about Jesus and His character that needs sanctifying because He is perfect, yet His act of pleasing and obeying the Father is central to the act and process of sanctification in His life and especially in His disciples' lives.

The prerequisite to the sanctification of the disciples was the cross, grave and exaltation of Jesus. This led to the giving of God's Spirit, which allowed the disciples to be saved, kept in Christ's character or name (17:11) and set apart in the truth of God (17:17). The work of sanctification was “for their sakes” and would allow the disciples to be sent as witnesses into the world in fulfillment of the mission of God in Christ (John 17:18).

Notice that Jesus sanctified Himself (“I sanctify myself”) which further demonstrates His oneness with and desire to glorify His Father through fulfillment of His Father's purposes. The disciples were different in that respect and could not sanctify themselves, but were dependent on the Father to sanctify them in the truth as Jesus sanctified Himself (John 17:17, 19).

As Jesus was set apart and completed His mission to the world in obedience to the Father, the mission of His disciples could now take place as they walked in obedience to being sent (John 17:18). Jesus was sent by the Father and He emphasized in this prayer the importance of His disciples being sent into the world. “Sent” refers to the act of being sent out on a purposeful mission. Today's two verses show a certain link between the sanctification of Jesus and His disciples with the mission of Jesus and His disciples. Thus, sanctification is a prerequisite to the accomplishment of the mission.

Finally, it is worth noting that both Jesus and His disciples were sent “into the world.” Just as God, through Jesus,

Section 3

In this last section, I will highlight the principle of revival prayer toward the mission. Every genuine revival and spiritual awakening results in a renewed desire among God's people to pray and be on mission in their world. In John 17:20, Jesus prayed for future generations of His followers who would believe through the disciples' witness. As Jesus prayed specifically for the leaders and witnesses down through the ages, He was preparing the way for the moving forward of the mission through their lives. The impact on the world would be huge. Prayer for Christians to be on mission with Jesus is the result of, and often leads to, a revived life and church. Revival prayer toward the mission also results in God's people experiencing and joining His redemptive activity in their world on a continual basis. When that takes place, spiritual awakening will soon come. Lord, bring it about today!

John 17:20

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.”

Day 21

#OnMissionTogether

LONG RANGE PRAYER

The importance of praying for believers and their fruitfulness beyond the present generation can never be underestimated. Over 30 years ago, I was challenged by the testimony of a Christian radio show host to pray beyond my present generation and to pray for four generations of my family — for their salvation and their faithful service to Christ. On that program, the host shared that his great-grandfather had prayed and seen every person saved and actively serve the Lord in the following four generations. I am grateful to God for His faithfulness as I have seen Him answer the same prayers for salvation and faithful service in my children’s lives and also as it begins to take place in my grandchildren’s lives.

Moses also demonstrated the importance of long-range prayer when he prayed in Psalm 90:16, “Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children.” Moses was praying for two generations, for God’s revelation of His powerful work and manifest presence among them as they navigated the waters of God’s judgement.

In John 17:20, Jesus demonstrated the importance of long-range prayer for future generations of believers. He not only prayed for His current disciples, who would take the gospel to the world in that generation, but He also prayed for “those who will believe” in Him “through their word.” “Believe” means to place one’s trust in Jesus through faith and obedience. This shows that Jesus is interceding on behalf of all future generations of believers, which included the present generation in which we live and even all generations of followers who would believe beyond this present generation.

This verse highlights Jesus as the forever High Priest who eternally intercedes on behalf

John 17:21

*“That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me,
and I in You; that they also may be one in Us.”*

Day 22

#OnMissionTogether

PRAYER TOWARD ONENESS

One of the hallmarks of the 1857-59 Layman’s Prayer Revival was the united prayer gatherings that spread from downtown Manhattan throughout most of the United States. These prayer gatherings were often interdenominational, multi-generational and even at times multi-racial. The solemn yet purposeful Spirit which prevailed in the prayer meetings produced a desire for intimacy and holiness in Christ. This led to an unusual oneness and desire among believers and churches to unite in the Great Commission. Believers would often come out of the prayer gatherings genuinely moved to immediately go find lost people to share Christ with or unite to plan evangelistic gatherings in the evenings. The manifest presence of God’s Spirit was the great unifying factor behind the oneness among the believers.

Jesus prays two specific prayers for believers in today’s verse. First, He prayed for oneness among His followers. The term “one” means to be united closely in will, purpose, mission and Spirit. This oneness, according to Jesus, is not something His followers can achieve for themselves, but is dependent upon the power

and presence of the Father, Son and Spirit. This is evident because He compares their oneness and unity to His Father being “in” Him and Jesus being “in” His Father. This meant that like Jesus and the Father, they would be one yet distinct in their person through God’s Spirit.

This comparison also shows that oneness among believers is only possible as they walk in a vital, real and intimate relationship with Christ. Therefore, if they are “in Christ” and “abide” in the “true vine”, they are able to walk in oneness, for apart from Jesus they cannot do anything (1 Corinthians 1:30; John 15:1-7). Notice also that Jesus’ prayer for oneness is for “all” believers. No true believer is exempt from His prayer for oneness or can

John 17:21

“That the world may believe that You sent Me.”

Day 23

#OnMissionTogether

FRUIT BEARING ONENESS

During the First Great Awakening (1732-1767), God used George Whitfield mightily to preach to the masses all up and down the colonies. Whitfield had a booming voice and was able to preach in churches, in parks and even in adjacent fields and pastures next to cities, towns and villages.

Despite being from England, God gave Whitfield a huge burden for the spiritual life of the American church and for the lost in the colonies. So much so, Whitfield traversed the Atlantic some thirteen times to preach and visit his orphanage in Savannah, Georgia. Whitfield also had a unique gift and anointing of God to bring God's people together for the mission. While in America, Whitfield not only was invited to preach in Anglican and Congregationalist churches but also made friends and ministered with Baptist, Presbyterian and Quaker pastors and churches. Many pastors and believers from different denominations attended Whitfield's open air meetings throughout the colonies. His desire to see oneness among believers and leaders for the sake of the mission was greatly used by God to see thousands converted to Christ and

denominations and churches revived during the First Great Awakening.

In John 17:21, Jesus' prayer for oneness highlights two essential truths related to believers and the mission of God. First, it points to the targeted audience which is the "world." Earlier, in John 17:9, Jesus did not pray for the world but for His disciples. But here, He focused His prayer on the lost world, which demonstrates His love for the world and His desire to see the world experience salvation through Him.

Second, the use of the term "that" makes this a purpose clause and points to the desired outcome for Jesus' prayer toward oneness. This reason is that the world may "believe." "Believe" means to trust, obey and surrender to

John 17:22

**“And the glory that You gave Me I have given them,
that they may be one just as We are one.”**

Day 24

#OnMissionTogether

GOD’S GLORY: THE GREAT UNIFIER

In today’s Scripture passage, Jesus prays toward the giving of the Father’s “glory,” which He received from the Father, to His followers.

This gift of God’s glory impacts His followers and their missional lives in several ways. First, “glory” refers to God’s manifest presence. Just as the Father is in and with the Son, so Jesus’ gift ensures the same for His followers. Without God’s presence, their mission would never be accomplished. Moses, David, Asa, Jehoshaphat and the sons of Korah to name a few, understood the desperate need for God’s presence and glory to be in and with them as they walked in obedience to His will (Exodus 33:15; 2 Chronicles 14:11; 20:12; Psalm 51:11; Psalm 42:1ff; 91:1). Later, in the book of Acts, the early church demonstrated this dependence and understanding of their need for God’s manifest presence through prayer (Acts 1:12-14; 2:42; 4:29-31; 13:1-4).

Second, “glory” refers to the infinite worth of God that is given by Jesus to His followers. Christ’s followers seemed to be a very insignificant group in that day. Yet, they were given eternal worth and value because they were now God’s servants. By surrendering,

believing and following Jesus, they became royalty and a part of God’s kingdom (1 Peter 2:9-10). Their worth and service was not determined by who they were as men but by God and His glory.

Third, the term “glory” in John 17:22 also referred to the glorification of Jesus through the cross, grave, resurrection and ascension. Christ’s “glory” was wrapped up in His obedience to the Father to fulfill His vicarious role as the suffering servant and Messiah Who provided salvation for a hopeless humanity. The followers of Jesus, by receiving the gift of God’s “glory,” were therefore commissioned to take up their own cross, deny themselves and faithfully obey and follow Him (Luke 9:23). Because of this, the cross that believers have to bear in this

John 17:23

***“I in them, and You in Me;
that they may be made perfect in one.”***

Day 25

#OnMissionTogether

ARE YOU BEING PERFECTED IN UNITY?

Jonathon Edwards, that great Puritan preacher, theologian and leader of the First Great Awakening (1732-1767), knew very well that a lack of mature oneness within the body of Christ could quench the work of the God's Spirit. Through Edward's leadership, praying and preaching, the Northampton, Massachusetts, congregation he pastored began to experience a movement of God in 1734. God multiplied conversions and the church and community was transformed as hundreds of people professed Jesus over the next couple of years. Soon, the revival fires spread to other churches in the Connecticut River Valley and eventually throughout New England and the southern colonies up until about 1767.

In the late 1740s, the revival began to wane in Edward's church as he faced problems and disunity with many of his congregants over the issue of conversion and church membership. Edwards promoted a conversion-based membership while many in the church wanted to keep the lax standards of the half-way covenant in place. This schism eventually led to a divided church and Edward's resignation in 1750. The glow of revival at the Northampton

congregation was no longer shining brightly due to a lack of perfected oneness amongst believers in the church.

In John 17:23, Jesus continued to pray toward oneness when He prayed that His followers would “be made perfect in one.” “Be made perfect” means to be brought to a completed form of oneness. This is not something that believers can accomplish themselves. It is something they are “made” into as they surrender and die to self through Jesus. The term carries with it the idea of growth to maturity and the force of the term points to a repeated action that continues toward a final goal.

Jesus' prayer is toward a mature oneness that steadily grows and is seasoned and able to withstand temptation

John 17:23

**“That they may be made perfect in one...
that the world may know that You have sent Me,
and have loved them as You have loved Me.”**

Day 26

#OnMissionTogether

DO YOU LIVE IN THE LOVE OF GOD?

Years ago, one of the most godly believers I have ever known told me that she was convinced through her study of the Bible and her Christian experience that the best way to win people into the kingdom is to love them into the kingdom. D. L. Moody, founder and chancellor of the Moody Bible Institute and a great preacher, evangelist and soul winner, believed this too.

Moody was converted by the simple message of God's love in Christ through the witness of Edward Kimball in the back room of the shoe store where Moody worked. Later, as God solidified his calling and ministry, Moody focused his messages on God's love in Christ and not just on the judgement of sin. When Moody began that practice, his ministry experienced unprecedented growth. Throughout his fruitful ministry, Moody remained faithful to preach the message of God's love in Chicago and around the world until his death in 1899.

In John 17:23, Jesus not only prayed for perfected oneness in His followers, but also toward two purposes related to the fulfillment of His mission through their lives. First, He

prayed, "...that the world may know that You (the Father) have sent me." This is similar to the phrase, "...that the world may believe that You sent Me..." in John 17:21. The difference in John 17:23 is that Jesus prays toward *knowing* instead of *believing*. To "know" in 17:23 is simply a continuation of the act of faith that the term "believe" represents in John 17:21. To "know" in John 17:23 is to know through experience and further shows Jesus' desire for the lost to experience eternal life through the witness of His followers.

Second, Jesus prayed toward the "love" of God. "Love" refers to God's *agape* love which is a sacrificial, selfless and outward-flowing love. This term represents the highest form of love that originates

with, and is from, God (1 John 4:7-21). It is best demonstrated by the Father as He sent Jesus to die on the cross for the sins of the world (John 3:16). As Jesus experienced, embodied and became the expression of this love to the world, He prayed for His followers to recognize that they were also recipients and instruments of this love.

The phrase “as You have loved Me” further solidifies the fact that Jesus’ followers were given the same *agape* love that Jesus received. This, of course, has great implications for a successful mission, as this *agape* love becomes the test for true discipleship and the bearing of lasting fruit in the world (John 15:9-17). This *agape* love therefore allows Christ followers to embody and live out Christ’s perfected oneness as His sent ones among the brethren and in the world. When believers are perfected in oneness, God’s *agape* love automatically flows out of their lives.

What are you doing with the *agape* love God has shown and given you?

PRAYER

PROMPTS

- *Father, may Your agape love flow through my life.*
- *Lord, may my church be a picture of agape love to one another and our world.*

PRAYER

NOTES

John 17:24

“Father I desire that they also whom You have given Me...”

Day 27

#OnMissionTogether

PASSIONATE PRAYER FOR THE MISSION

The Bible is replete with examples of individuals who prayed passionately for a certain thing. In Genesis 33:15, Moses passionately pleaded for God’s presence to go with him as he led God’s people toward the promised land. Jehoshaphat cried out with great passion for God’s intervention in 2 Chronicles 20:12. Isaiah prayed passionately toward the confession of sin in Isaiah 6:5. David cried out in desperate prayer for the Lord to not cast him away because of his sin in Psalm 51:11.

Nehemiah passionately prayed for the Lord to hear his prayer for favor in Nehemiah 1:11. The priests and ministers wept and prayed passionately for the Lord’s restoration in Joel 2:17. Peter prayed a passionate prayer for the Lord to save him when he began to sink in Matthew 14:30. The early church cried out in passionate prayer for the Lord to help them and grant boldness to preach in Acts 4:29.

Throughout history, Christians have practiced passionate prayer. Christian apologist Athenagoras passionately prayed Scripture on behalf of the Roman rulers’ salvation

during the last half of the second century. Patrick of Ireland passionately prayed for the spread of the gospel among the Irish people in the early to mid 400s. John Knox was feared by Queen Mary of Scotland because he passionately prayed for God to give him Scotland or that he would die during the middle 1500s. John Hyde wept and cried out for God to give him souls or that he would die in the Punjab region of India from 1892-1906.

In today’s text, Jesus models passionate prayer on behalf of His present and future followers who will believe in Him throughout history. This is the last major prayer that Jesus prayed for His followers in John 17. The other four prayers are found in John 17:11, 15, 17, 21. These five

prayers represent the heart of Jesus' intercessions on behalf of His present and future followers who would bear witness to Him in a pagan world.

Jesus begins this prayer with the use of the term "Father." "Father" is used six times in this prayer. The repetitive use of the term shows that Jesus did not pray in a vacuum; He prayed to His Father, upon whom He was dependent and knew intimately. Jesus also knew that only His Father could fulfill the urgent request He was praying for His followers.

The use of the term "desire" is at the heart of this passionate request. "Desire" is more than a wish and represents here the deepest longing of His will. In other words, this was no lighthearted prayer. It was a prayer filled with passion and intent. By using this term, Jesus demonstrated His passion for His followers to be present with Him and fully equipped and provided for by the Father with everything they needed to complete their mission. Are we, like Jesus, passionately praying toward the fulfillment of the mission? True revival always produces passionate prayer toward the mission.

PRAYER

PROMPTS

- *Father, forgive my lack of passionate prayer for the mission.*
- *Lord, may my church be a catalyst for passionate prayer for the mission.*

PRAYER

NOTES

John 17:24

**“I desire that they also whom You gave Me,
may be with Me where I am.”**

Day 28

#OnMissionTogether

WHERE IS JESUS?

In today's verse, Jesus longs to have His disciples and all future believers present “with Him” wherever He is. Notice the use of the term “I am.” Jesus is again praying toward His oneness with the Father as the great “I am” — the God of the Bible who was, is, and will always be (Exodus 3:13-14). The use of this term ties this prayer to the seven “I am” sayings that are found earlier in John (6:48; 8:12; 10:7,9; 10:11,14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1,5). The seven “I am” passages relate to being with and experiencing Jesus (I am) wherever He is in this world and beyond. Jesus desires their presence and longs for them to join Him wherever He is at work in three ways.

First, Jesus longs for His followers to be with Him in heaven. This petition first points toward eschatological notions of the experience of His future glory. Jesus would soon ascend to the right hand and eternally intercede for the saints (Hebrews 7:25). One day, when this life is over, all believers will experience the bliss of heaven with Jesus. Jesus prayed for them to be confident in their salvation and the eternal blessing of being with Him in heaven forever. Jesus also verbalized this promise to

His disciples as He prepared them for His departure in John 14:1-6. Are you confident in your salvation and that you will be with Jesus in heaven when you die?

Second, Jesus longs for His followers to be with Him through a vital relationship as they walk in their world. Eternal life is not just something believers experience when they are in heaven with Jesus. Eternal life begins in this world as they believe and are born again in Jesus (John 3:1-16; 14:15-17). Because of this, Jesus dwells in His followers through the Spirit and He will never leave or forsake them (Matthew 28:20). This prayer is for Jesus' followers to walk in step with Jesus and live daily with Him in the secret place of the Lord through a vital, real and

intimate relationship (Psalm 91:1). Are you walking in step with Jesus through a vital and alive relationship?

Third, Jesus longs for His followers to be with Him in the mission. Jesus is praying specifically for them to be with Him as He is at work in their world through the Great Commission and Great Commandment (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 28-34). This, again, is only made possible through God's Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 16:8, "And when He comes, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment." The Holy Spirit of God not only dwells in believers but is also at work in the world, convicting and drawing people to experience salvation in Jesus. Jesus desires and prays that His followers will be with and join Him as He is at work in the world bringing people into the kingdom of God. Are you with Jesus in your world through the Great Commission and Great Commandment?

This prayer has significant application to the body of Christ today. Do you know where Jesus is? Are you in step with Him today? Are you praying for others to be with Jesus in heaven, in intimacy and in the mission? I wonder what would happen if we were faithful to pray toward being with Jesus rather than always asking Him to be with us in what we set out to do?

PRAYER PROMPTS

- *Father, help me be with You in intimacy and wherever You are at work in my world.*
- *Oh God, help our church to not miss Your work in our world.*

PRAYER NOTES

John 17:24

“That they... may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me.”

Day 29

#OnMissionTogether

PRAYING TOWARD GOD’S NEXT “SUDDENLY”

Wesley Duewel (1916-2016), a missionary and a man of prayer, was passionate about seeing God’s people join Him in His mission in their world. For over 70 years, he labored faithfully for the cause of missions around the globe. Duewel believed in prevailing prayer and had a unique burden to pray for God to move through revival and spiritual awakening.

Duewel also believed that the ordinary Christian could join God’s mission and have an influence around the world toward spiritual awakening as they prayed. It was through such spiritual awakenings that Duewel believed God could bring about a rapid marching forward of the mission across any country. Because of that, he wrote extensively on the subject of prayer, revival and spiritual awakening and challenged believers to passionately pray for God to come suddenly through revival.

In today’s text, the reason Jesus prayed for His followers to be present with Him was so that they would “behold His glory.” “Glory,” in this specific verse, is the more common use of the term which refers to the revealed manifest

holiness of God and His redemptive activity that is demonstrated in the world through the Holy Spirit.

In addition to Jesus’ prayer toward the gift of His “glory” and perfected oneness in John 17:22, Jesus also prayed toward the intersection of the convicting work of God’s Spirit in the world with God’s Spirit’s work through His obedient, anointed and sent followers (John 16:8; Acts 1:8). This divinely orchestrated intersection between the two becomes a kairos, or God moment, when the glory of God is revealed as the message of Jesus bears eternal fruit when lost people are saved in the world (Colossians 1:9-13). The mission moves forward as the followers of

Jesus are with Him and experience or join Him in His redemptive “glory” as His witnesses.

The use of the term “behold” is significant. “Behold” refers to the manner in which Jesus prayed His disciples would experience God’s redemptive presence through His glory. “Behold” means to see, gaze upon or experience and has the thrust of someone giving focused attention and gazing upon something with great interest and purpose. The action of the verb carries with it the sense of a sudden burst of revelation that has been building. The mood is subjunctive which means, in this context, the reality of the experience of God’s redemptive glory remains contingent upon the manifestation of God’s presence and the obedience of those who are sent.

This type of praying produces Spirit-filled living and intimacy with Christ as believers walk with Him in His eternal mission to redeem a fallen world. Jesus’ prayer in John 17:24 should be every believer’s and every church’s prayer today. Praying for the believer to be on mission with Jesus leads to a revived life, where God’s redemptive activity is experienced through and by His followers on a continual basis. That is spiritual awakening in its purest form. Are you praying to be with Jesus where He is so that you may “behold” His redemptive glory?

PRAYER

PROMPTS

- *Father, come suddenly through revival and spiritual awakening.*
- *Lord, may my church faithfully pray for believers to behold God’s redemptive glory in the mission.*

PRAYER

NOTES

John 17:25-26

“O righteous Father! The world has not known You... I have...and will declare to them Your name...that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Day 30

#OnMissionTogether

OVERCOMING HOSTILITY THROUGH LOVE

Throughout history, because they were recipients of the *agape* love of Christ, Christian witnesses like Cyprian, John Huss, Olaf of Norway, David Brainerd, George Whitfield, Jim Elliott and many others overcame hostility from the world throughout life or even in death for the sake of the advancement of God's kingdom. Like Paul, these individuals were compelled by the love of Christ to be on mission despite the risk of encountering unbelief, hatred and hostility from the world (2 Corinthian 5:14).

In John 17:25-26, Jesus concludes His high priestly prayer with the sixth use of the term “Father,” which again demonstrates that this prayer is all about His Father. This time, as in verse 11, His address points to another element of God's character. Here, Jesus calls on His “righteous Father.” The use of the term “righteous” reminds His followers that God is never wrong, always pure, totally upright and completely without any fault. Because of this, His judgments are always right and based upon truth. This also shows His followers that, since the Father is “righteous,” He is just and will not award the same eternal outcome to His

faithful followers that He will to the lost world.

Jesus' declaration of the Father's “name” or character in this prayer means that Jesus revealed God's essential and whole nature to His followers. With this declaration, He also prayed toward the continuation of the revelation of the Father's name through the cross, resurrection, ascension and the giving of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would thus come and empower His followers to experience, embrace and share God's *agape* “love” as His ambassadors and witnesses in their world (Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

Unlike Jesus and His followers, “the world has not known” the Father (John 17:26). As noted before in John 17:14, the mission field is a hostile

place to witness due to the fact that the world hated the disciples just as they hated Jesus (John 15:18). Those that would believe in and follow Jesus through the disciples' witness should expect nothing less from an unbelieving world. However, because of the indwelling Holy Spirit, Christ's followers down through the ages would be empowered to effectively "love" the world despite the world's hostility and unbelief. And, as Christ's followers genuinely lived and shared the sacrificial, outward flowing *agape* love of Christ with the hostile world, they could see the mission of God move forward in their world.

Today the American Church seems to be hunkering down in the trenches because the culture is growing more and more pagan. Our praying often reflects where our hearts or minds are focused and we often pursue the things we are praying toward. That is why we need to focus our praying on the kingdom coming as Jesus did in His high priestly prayer in John 17. Spiritual awakening must start with the church being revived to a holy, faithful, biblical Christianity that is passionately praying, loving and taking the gospel to the nations. That is in essence what Jesus prayed toward in John 17. Missional prayer is therefore at the heart of spiritual awakening. Shall we pray?

PRAYER PROMPTS

- *Father, teach me to pray selfless prayers for the salvation of this pagan culture.*
- *Lord, may my church be a catalyst for sharing Your love with a hostile world.*

PRAYER NOTES

These Devotions

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