



DATE: March 9, 2009

TEXT: John 17: 1-11

TITLE: “The Real Lords Prayer I”

Easter Sunday is now about one month away. For the next 4 Sundays I am going to look at John 17 and possibly 18. First a brief word about the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John has been broken down into 21 chapters. The amazing fact is this.... five of those chapters deal with one speech in the life of Christ. John chapters 13 to 17 all deal with Jesus speaking to the disciples in the upper room immediately before his arrest and crucifixion. This speech is interspersed with the celebration of the Passover meal. This long, final time of teaching concludes with a prayer.

Let me say, I believe this is the greatest prayer ever prayed. One associate of Dwight L. Moody gave 43 sermons on just this prayer... I'll only be giving 3. It is often called the “High Priestly Prayer.” It is called this because it is reminiscent of the Prayer the High Priest prays on the day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. Once per year in Judaism of Jesus’ day, the High Priest would offer a great prayer asking God to forgive the sins of the people for the past year. He

would then enter the Holy of Holies in the Temple and offer a lamb as a sacrifice for the sins of the people. Jesus knew that a lamb was about to be offered for the sins of the people. Jesus knew this was the only way to truly bring forgiveness. Jesus knew he was the lamb of God that was about to be sacrificed. He offered this prayer as his final act before his arrest.

I do believe this is the real Lord's Prayer. What we call "The Lord's Prayer". The prayer we say every week, is really the disciples prayer. They came to Jesus and made a simple request.... "Lord, teach us how to pray." Jesus then said Pray like this... "Our Father who art in heaven...." That really is the disciples prayer given to us by the Lord. John 17 gives us a prayer for the Lord... praying for His disciples and for you and me. Jesus specifically prays for you and me in this prayer. It is truly the "Lord's prayer."

In the next 3 weeks we will look at the prayer from three different angles. This morning I want to share lessons on the one who prayed the prayer this week and next week... then we will look at the prayers of thanks giving in the prayer and in 3 weeks we will see the prayers of request.

You can tell a lot about a person when you listen to their prayers. In *Luke 18* you hear Jesus tell the parable of the tax collector. It is a contrast of prayers. First, you hear the tax collector give this prayer to God...

**'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'**

Next, you hear the tax collector pray...

**13"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'**

By listening to their prayers you learn about their relationship with God... and about their personalities. Prayer reveal much. We are going to use this prayer of Jesus to gain an insight into the person of our Lord. I will share 2 lessons this morning

**Lesson # 1** Note Christ's deep personal relationship with the heavenly Father. *John 17:5, 24*

**5And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.**

**24"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.**

Notice tow amazing facts in these verses. First, God is addressed as Father. We tend to say... “no big deal.” Understand this... it is a big deal... a very big deal. At this time in Judaism

God had become very impersonal and very holy. The *New American commentary* says this..

**Jesus came into a Jewish world that had developed a remote view of God, one that needed angels to carry messages. The people had ceased to use the name of God for fear of taking his name in vain. Into this context of speaking of God by surrogate titles Jesus came and called God his Father. But what was even more astounding was that he taught his disciples to pray “Our Father.” For the Jews of that day such a personal view of God was very degrading of God and akin to blasphemy.**

Jesus brought this understanding of God. We can have a personal, intimate relationship with our heavenly Father. Not only was this revolutionary 2000 years ago in Judaism.... it continues to be revolutionary today. Only Christianity... of all the religions of the world... speaks of an intimate personal relationship with God. It is not true in Islam. To speak of a close relationship with Allah would be considered blasphemy. Not true in Buddhism...not true in Hinduism.... only Christianity.

And the amazing truth is this... even in Christianity people avoid this truth. People turn God into an impersonal, remote object of worship. He is kept at arms length and locked up into predetermined areas of a persons life.

I was watching a news show on FOX the other day and they had a story about a church out west that was teaching members how to deal with the recession from God’s quote “so called”

lessons on money management. The implication was very clear.... of course money management was not something God would be interested. It was too personal... too relevant. It was outside this reporters predetermined area of religion. I wanted to tell the reporter that money and financial lesson was the # 1 topic of Jesus' parables... far more than love.... more than faith... money management.

That is the # 1 weapon of Satan. He tries to turn Christianity into another religion. Habits of obligation and duty. Actions to minimally please a fairly aloof God. Jesus, in this prayer teaches just the opposite. Christianity is intimate relationship with a present, loving God

But there is another truth revealed in these texts... let me read the texts again....

**5And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.**

**24"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.**

Notice that these texts also teach us that the relationship between God the Son and God the Father was eternal... before the world began. Jesus Christ is our eternal God and Lord.

Yes, we can have an intimate relationship with our Lord, Jesus Christ... but we must never

forget... he is the God of the universe. The Eternal ‘I Am.’ The Eternal being. So yes, have the intimacy with him... but at the same time... worship him. At the same time remember He is holy.. He is almighty. This is the relationship we have with our God... intimate, respectful.... worshipful ...loving... fearful..... joyful.

**Lesson # 2** This text teaches us of Christ’s perfect life. This lesson is learned not so much by a certain verse in our text.. It is pointed out by what is not in our text. There is no prayer of confession. In the prayer Jesus taught to the disciples we are commanded to pray like this... **“Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”** There is not line like this in this prayer. Why not? Because Jesus Christ did not need to confess. Jesus was perfect without sin.

*Hebrews 4:15* gives this truth

**For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.**

Remember, Jesus was saying this prayer at the end of the Passover Seder. Fresh in everyone’s mind was the story of the first Passover given to us by Moses in Exodus. We remember the story... after 400 years of slavery in Egypt that began the soon after Joseph died,

Moses approached the Pharaoh and asked him to release the Israelites. The people had grown in Egypt from the 70 that accompanied Jacob to almost 400,000. The Pharaoh did not want to release 400,000 slaves. Moses tells Pharaoh that the water will turn to blood if he does not let the Israelites go. He refuses and the water is turned to blood. Next are a series of plagues.... frogs.... gnats... flies...boils....hail...locusts...darkness... still Pharaoh would not release the slaves. Finally Moses told Pharaoh that if he did not let his people go the Spirit of Death would go across the land. The Israelites were commanded to go and kill an “unblemished lamb” and place the blood on the post of their door so the Spirit of Death would Pass over their houses. Jesus clearly is saying he is the lamb of God that would thwart the Spirit of Death.... and he is not just any lamb... he is the lamb without blemish... he is the perfect lamb.

Here is the Good news of Christ... when we stand before the judgement seat of God... those who have an intimate relationship of God will be judged, not on the actions of our lives... but on the actions of Jesus Christ. His perfect, sinless life will be the basis of our judgement. His act of sacrifice on the cross will be the basis of our judgement.

Our faith is based on the nature of God and on the nature of Jesus Christ. The amazing truth is this... when Jesus walked on this earth he prayed for us.... and he still prays for us today.

*Romans 8:34 states...*

**Who would dare to accuse us, whom God has chosen. The judge himself has declared us free from sin. Who is in the position to condemn? Only Christ. And Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns for us, Christ prays for us!**

Christ continues to pray for us even today. We need to give him our intimacy... our lives.

We need to give him glory... our worship. We need to give him our praise... he is the

unblemished lamb who died for our sins. Thank you Lord Jesus for your prayers... your actions... your life.

AMEN