Closing Prayer

Pastor Jeff Bucknam | John 17:1–27

For a brief recap, the sermon's title was: **Closing Prayer**
Main Points were: 1. Jesus Prays God Will Finish What's Been Planned (vv. 1–5);
2. Jesus Prays God Will Protect His Disciples' Faith (vv. 6–16);
3. Jesus Prays God Will Set His Disciples Apart from the World (vv. 17–19);
4. Jesus Prays His Disciples Will Be Unified (vv. 20–23)
5. Jesus Prays His Disciples Will Finally Be with Him (vv. 24–26)

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group and family discussion, or for personal reflection. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Icebreaker

What's your favorite icebreaker question?

Understanding the Text in Context

Read the text together. Remember that this is part of Jesus' "Upper Room Discourse," from John chapter 13 through John 17. John 17 is Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer." His betrayal and arrest are right around the corner. Also, you can listen to John 17 at the Symphony of Scripture, the Gospel of John (track 30, from 7:25 to 12:03).

In verse 1, Jesus says, "the hour has come." Jesus' " hour" has been mentioned before (Jn 2:4; Jn 7:30; Jn 8:20; Jn 12:23, 27; Jn 13:1). What is Jesus' "hour"? How does that hour underscore the importance of Jesus' prayer?

Why is "glory" such an important and repeated emphasis in John 17:1-5? How is "eternal life" (v.

2-3) an aspect of that glory? Why is "eternal life" so deeply relational? (See v. 3).

Connecting to Jesus and His Gospel

In John 17:23b Jesus prays to the Father: "so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." How does knowing God loves us as He loved Jesus change our identity?

Jesus desires us to be with him; how does the Gospel make that possible? What verses in John 17 help us know and embrace Jesus and His Gospel?

Jesus knows the pain he will go through on the cross; how does his willingness to go shape how we view God in our life?

Living Out the Truth

What are ways that you are guarding your heart from the evilness of this world? Jesus prayed that I would be sanctified by the truth (Jn 17:17). What part of my life is He currently calling me to surrender to that truth? Discuss and encourage one another in practical ways to not be "of" the world, yet be Jesus-followers while living in the world.

As Jesus prays for our faith and sanctification, how can we also pray for other believers in their walk with Jesus? Who can you pray for today? Pray for some of them together.

Jesus prays in perfect unity with the Father. How does that unity of purpose encourage you with the outcome of Jesus' prayers? See especially John 17:24-27.

While we are not "of" the world, we are still "in" the world (it's where we "live and move and have our being" [Acts 17:26-28]). Discuss and encourage one another as you live not "of the world" by *absorbing* everything nor by *avoiding* everyone or everything in the culture. What has helped you navigate the extremes of complete absorption (adopting everything in the culture) and complete avoidance (isolating from everything in the culture)?

A striking part of Jesus' prayer is for *future* believers (John 17:20-21) – including us! Together, pray for those you know who are not believers, but by God's grace, may one day become believers.

How might this prayer help provide a model for your prayers? Be specific. If you do not already have regular times in prayer, add some to your calendar this week.

Parenting Moment and Family Focus

Jesus Himself prays to the Father and intercedes for His disciples – both then and now, He continues to intercede for us. What are things your family wants to pray for together? Make a list and place it somewhere so that you can remember to pray. Discuss how it changes the way we pray, knowing God hears us and Christ intercedes for us.

Further Study

Read (or listen in 5 Minutes) how John 17 was "My First Anchor" for an important figure in church history.

Common questions arise about God's Sovereignty and people's responsibility. This text in John is a case in point (see verses 6 and 9, for example). For helpful insight, watch a short video: The Doctrine of God's Sovereignty

While we are not "of" the world, we can still be a blessing to others in the world. Politics is one way the world works, and with elections this week, it could work better: "Voting and the Lesser of Two Evils."

Jesus prayed. He prayed in line with God's promises and character. So should we:
How Do I Pray the Bible?

In your John Study Journals, look ahead to next week's sermon and text for John 18:1–27:
"Everything is Falling Apart. Everything is Falling Into Place, Parts 1, 2, and 3."