



Essentials for a Healthy Church: *Devotion to Prayer*

April 14, 2019

Jesus' Life of Prayer

OPENER: *What's the shortest prayer you've ever prayed? The most heart-felt?*

It is safe to say that Jesus' prayer life is certainly a model for us, though most of us fall far short of having that kind of relationship with the Father. Instead of beating ourselves up about that or heaping even more guilt upon ourselves... tonight let us focus on what we can learn about prayer from Jesus' example and do so by listening in on the extended prayer we have in John 17 just before He went to the cross for us. Let us notice what He prayed about, how He prayed and who He prayed for! It is likely typical of the way He prayed, but it is also a prayer of crisis. Knowing the end was near, THIS is what Jesus chose to pray!

DIG: READ JOHN 17:1-25

- What seems to be the matter of first importance for Jesus knowing that the end was near and His time on earth was short? Who sorts of things does He pray about?
- What is Jesus' desire for His own life?
- Next, Jesus prays for his disciples. What kind of responsibility did He feel towards them? What is His primary concern?
- What other sorts of things do you think He knew they would be facing when He is gone?
- These are Jesus' final moments... what else might be very important for Him to spend this time doing? What does it tell us that He spent this time in prayer?
- Next, who does Jesus pray for? Who does this include? (vss. 26-26)
- How do you see this aspect of Jesus' prayer being answered today? Or do you? Why or why not?
- What is Jesus' overarching desire for His people today? How important is that?

- What else do you see in Jesus' prayer for those of us who have come to be believers since the time of the apostles?
- What do we learn about Jesus from this prayer? About prayer?

Discuss:

- What can we observe about the WAY in which Jesus prayed that might be instructive for us? For example, where was he? Who was around? What about His posture or position?
- This prayer expresses Jesus' desire that His life be a glory to God. How can each of our lives also be a glory to God at the end? Whom have you glorified by the way you have lived this week?
- If you had to write a purpose or mission statement to summarize your life, what would it be?
- Jesus' prayer in Jn 17 is ultimately a prayer of intercession. How much attention do you give in your prayers to interceding for others? Who is on your heart today we need to pray for?
- Obviously, the unity of all believers is something Jesus prayed for. How important do you see this today? What efforts towards this worthy goal do you see being put forth today? How can we at Washington Street also be a part of the answer to this prayer today?
- What pitfalls do we need to also be aware of?

PRAY

Be sure to close with an extended time of prayer. How can we pray for you tonight?