

# Jesus prays for all believers

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[0:00] Here's my notes. There we are. Blank. So you're going to have to help with this.! So we're looking at John 17 verses 20 and onwards.

! Anybody like to tell us? It's a fairly natural division.

Which verse is the first part? 1 to 5. 1 to 5. And Jesus prays.

Hold on, hold on, hold on. Jesus prays. 1 to 5. Anybody like to say, roughly speaking, it's a bit of an oversimplification, what does he pray for in those first five verses?

Sorry? For himself. Yeah. It's, yes, he's praying to the Father. There's a bit more to it than that, but roughly speaking, we say he prays for himself.

[1:18] Now the next section is verses 6 to 19. And who is he praying for in verses 6 to 19?

Disciples. Yeah. The disciples. I'm assuming this is coming out on the screen. I'm just happily writing away. Yes, it is, isn't it? All disciples or some particular disciples?

The apostles. The apostles, yes. Now apostle means sent ones. And these people are sent because he says in verse 18, I send them into the world.

We could say a little bit more about the particular situation of these disciples or apostles. What do they have which makes them different to us?

Or what is their situation that's different to our situation? Thank you. They walked with Jesus. Okay, let's put them walking with Jesus.

[2:31] So there's walking. Anything else that they did as regards Jesus that's different to us? They were eyewitnesses.

So let's put an eye. Okay, that's an eye looked at from the side. And that's very important. John emphasizes this again and again.

We saw it. So there's not just disciples in general or disciples as a representative group, but as a specific group, they saw.

Anything else that we could say that was specific to them? They heard directly. So I'll put an ear. Yeah, they heard.

They were eyewitnesses. And if there was such a word, ear witnesses. And in another place it says they touched Jesus. So I don't know whether there's a word for touch witnesses, but we'll put a hand there, shall we?

[3:29] And it's very important that we grasp that these people, they have much in common with us, but they have something which marks them off as being very different.

They were the ones who saw. They were the ones who heard. They were the ones who touched Jesus. And our contact with Jesus is via what they tell us.

Because we don't see Jesus directly. We don't hear him directly. We hear him through what they tell us. And I have been reading about this. And you could almost say, and I'm trying this thought on for size, that John would see himself as the prime example of such a witness.

And he's writing this, not just as one disciple among many, or one apostle among many, but as a sense as he writes this, he says, let me speak for all of us disciples.

I'm going to tell you, I am going to put myself forward as the witness to these things. And in one place at the cross, does he not say, let's see whether he does say this or not, in chapter 19, verse 35, he says, he says in 1935, the man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true.

[5:03] He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you may believe. And you could almost say that John sees himself as the one, the sort of the witness.

But there is this group who, in their own way and in their own turn, are indeed witnesses. So that's the verses 6 to 19.

And then verses 20 to the end, 20 to 26, which we're going to look at, who are the people for whom Jesus prays there? Us. Thank you.

And how does he describe us? How do we know that it is us? Sorry? Yes. Thank you very much. It's verse 20. My prayer is not for them alone. That's not for this lot alone, but for all who will believe in me through their message. So these are believers in thee.

[6:12] The message, it actually says word, word and message, either way you could translate it. But the particular word or message that they're believing is the one that these people spoke, isn't it?

It's what these people spoke and these people believe it. So if I put believers in the apostolic word, that would be fair.

Are you happy with the apostolic? It just means the word that the apostles spoke. Okay. So that lets us know what we're going to look at. So that was the easy bit. Right. Let's see if we can get a bit more space on here.

Right. Let's do what we can with the next few verses. So Jesus is praying for these people.

And I'll do a little picture, which I think will help us fit in it. So this is the circle of the people that he's praying for. Okay.

[7:17] So these is us. These people are in this circle here. And I will put another circle for.

Does that show? Can you see that? Okay. So that's representing the son. And then another circle just matching and close by, which is the father.

Okay. So we've got something about the father, something about the son, something about us lot. And let's do one other group of people who are over here.

And these people are what Jesus describes as the world. And when he says the world, he doesn't mean the world of elephants and sharks and volcanoes.

He means the world of people. In this case, he means the world of people. And particularly, the world meaning people, humanity, who have not come to God, who don't submit to God, who reject God.

[8:30] That's the, that's what is generally meant by the world in this connection. Now, I think that Jesus says sort of the same thing twice.

And let's see if we can, let's see if you agree with me. So let me read the verses. My prayer is not for them alone.

I pray for those who will believe in me through their word, that all of them may be one father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. Okay. End of number one. Now we try it again. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.

I in them and you in me. So that they may be brought to complete unity, to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them, even as you have loved me.

[9:40] End of number two. Now you see what I mean, that it's, it's a lot to get your head around. I find it is. Anyway, maybe you, maybe I'm just being, um, obtuse.

Let's see if we can pick this out a little bit. And tease a little bit out of it. So there's number one, which ends, I think at the end of verse 21. And then I think a similar thing, if not the same thing said again, ending in verse 23.

So let's do the end first. Jesus says something, and he puts a number of so that's in each case. So here's a question.

What is the so that, or the so that's, which are to do with the world? So there's probably at least two. One to do with number one, and one to do with when he says it again. What are the so that's to do with the world? So that the world can see that, um, um, that we are in him, and therefore we are witnessing for him.

[10:47] Right. Don't take it too far. Give us which verse that you're on. Verse 23.

Verse 23. Okay. Is there, does it say so that? No, it just says to that. Does it have a let that? No, that you sent me and have loved them, even as you have loved me.

So let's, okay, let's, let's try this one then. So there's an effect from whatever Jesus prays for to the world. And this effect is that they may know something.

Let's just undo that. So that they may know something. And in particular, what are they, what, what is it that they are meant to know?

Thank you. That the father sent the son. That's one thing.

[11:58] And the father loves them. And the father loves them. In what way does the father love them? Wow.

What a, what an amazing thing. Let's make a little bit of space. So, so number one, to know that the father sent the son.

And then it says, to know that, you have, you have, have loved them, even as you have loved me.

So that the father loves, Christians, if I put that, Christians like that, as, he loves, he loves, the son.

Okay, I meant to do an introduction, which was on my piece of paper here, which said, I think we'll find it rather interesting, to see what Jesus prays, for his churches.

[13:14] Because, when we pray for the churches, we've got some ideas, what, what, what God wants. So we might pray, we might pray for them, to be, very numerous.

There'll be a lot of people in the church. We might pray for the churches, to be very powerful. Lord, make it so that all the politicians, take notice of what the church says.

But it's very interesting, what Jesus prays. You're almost tempted to say, has Jesus missed the point? You know, but, it just shows us that, if anybody's missed the point, it's us.

This is what Jesus prays for. He says, I want the church to be, the sort of people, so that the world will know, that the Father sent the Son.

And, that the world will know, that these people, are loved, wait for it, the way, the Father loves the Son.

[14:18] And, I think everybody's jaw, should just be being picked up, from the ground. Because, you think, can God, love, people like us, with the same love, that he loves his Son?

It is mind-blowing, isn't it? And, Jesus says, this is the end result, of my prayer, that the world will know this.

I don't think he means to say, that everybody in the world, will be totally convinced, of all of this.

And, there'll be no unbelievers. I think he's saying, that this would be the, the way that witness operates.

And, in fact, some people in the world, will not only, receive this witness, but, believe this witness.

But, this is what he's saying.

Okay, this is, so that was, the end of the second statement. What about, anything else about the world? So, I'm looking now, towards the end of verse 21. What's the result, on the world, the first time around, Jesus says it?

[15:29] Well, I was thinking, thank you for that.

And, that's, that's a, that's a helpful thought. I, I was thinking more specifically, of, end of verse 21. Yes, okay. So, notice, that in this occasion, it says, believe. And, on this occasion, it says, that you have sent me.

So, again, it's that the father has sent the son. So, let's stop on that for a moment. Because, I think these words are actually quite compressed.

So, one thing I noticed was that, in one case, the answer is to believe. In the second case, the answer is to know. So, it makes me think that, as the way Jesus thinks, believing and knowing aren't too different, really.

[16:35] It's almost interchangeable. So, I found that a helpful thought about, what faith is. Faith isn't, isn't, vastly different, from knowing.

It is, to perceive in such a way, as to know and depend upon something. Okay, that's one thought I had. Then I thought this one, the father sent the son. And you might think, well, that's a little bit of a, a low, target, isn't it?

That people think the father sent the son. And then you stop to think about it, and you say, what is that saying? Because, I think it's saying something about, the person of Jesus.

Who is he? He's the one sent, by the father. Or actually sent, from the father. And you think, well, is that, I mean, was John the Baptist, sent, sent, sent by the father?

No, think of your favorite preacher. Is he somebody sent, by the father? You say, yes, in a sense. But this is different, isn't it? This is, very specific.

[17:46] That this Jesus, I think we could even say, was sent, from the father. Who is he? Who is he? He's the one, who has always been, with the father.

And the father, has sent him. He was, in the beginning, was the word, and the word was, with God, and the word was God. That's the word, that was made flesh.

He's the one, who was sent from God. And he says, so I think this is a statement, about Jesus, as his person. That's, who he is. Not just, any old, human being.

But, sent from God. And I think it's also, a statement about his work. Because when you send somebody, you usually send them, with a purpose, don't you? You send them, to buy a bottle of milk.

Why are you here? I don't know, I've completely forgotten. You were sent, to get a bottle of milk. That was your purpose. That was your mission. Go and get the milk. And Jesus says, I want people to know, that the father sent me, on a mission, with a purpose.

[18:55] And why was he sent? Well he sent, to save us, wasn't he? To come into this world, to do all that was necessary, for our salvation.

And we would say, I mean that includes, a number of things, a large number of things, but in particular, to die on the cross for us. So I think Jesus, has compressed that, into those sentences. So that, people would know, that the father sent the son. And that the people would know, that the father loves Christians, as he loves his own son.

Well that's what Jesus, that was the outcome of the prayer. So let's go back. So that was the end result, of the prayer. Could we say, what Jesus, does, I want to draw an arrow, that goes this way now, from the son, to this group of people.

So I'll say again, it happens in verse, verse 21, and then it's repeated, in verse 22, 23. Although, slightly differently. Anybody, hazard a guess, what does Jesus, do for the, disciples, between verses 20, and 21?

[20:24] Okay, okay, let's, let's, let's hold on to that. Because you, you quoted us verse 22, I'm going to come to that, in a moment. What, what do they do, what does Jesus do, for them, in verses 20, and 21?

There's just one thing, which is actually fairly obvious, when you, pray. He prays for them. So the first thing, that we get here, is, Jesus prays for them.

And if I might say, I think that's an encouraging thought, isn't it? Jesus prays, for us, I pray for them. I think that's really encouraging. And then, the second time round, it's, it's different.

I think we could say, that they're related. So in verse 22, Jesus says, what, what has Jesus done, for these people? And Julia gave us the answer, I have given them glory.

So I'll put that in. Do you agree? I, verse 22, I have given them glory. And I'm, trying to get my head round this, while I'm trying to get my head round it, and you're trying to get your head round it, I could ask, what glory is it that he's given?

[21:47] Please look into the text, and tell me, what glory has Jesus given, to us? No, no, no, no.

What glory? Thank you. The glory, that the father gave the son. So what we will see, and I don't want to get over complicated, it's a, it's a deep passage, but the father, gave the son glory.

And Jesus passes on this glory, to his people. And you get a number of these comparisons, between father and the son, and son, and what he does for his people.

So let's just see it again. The glory bit, verse 22, I have given them, the glory, that you gave me. which is pretty amazing, isn't it? I think with all of these things, we have to say that there's, there's a comparison, without, without taking that comparison, to its ultimate conclusion.

[23:01] So, we are not made into God, but we are, we receive something, that is almost like that.

Almost like that. We are given the glory, that the father gave the son. Right. Let's, let's, let's go to now, there's a, a that.

Actually, there's a number of that's. Let's take the that, in verse 21. So what is the prayer? In verse 21, I pray that. Okay.

I guess, it gets, it gets very mind blowing, doesn't it? So he prays, that all of them, may be one. So the, all of them, is, is, the disciples, no, sorry, the believers, and I think he means the disciples as well.

So that, the disciples, and the believers, may all be one. So that's why I said there's a sort of commonality between, disciples, sorry, yeah, between us, and, and, and, and the apostles and disciples.

[24:35] We, we're, we're brought into the same blessings, that they had. But this language of one, is, is very interesting.

It's very interesting. So let me stop and go back to my notes for another point. Because this passage, is often used, by the ecumenical movement.

And ecumen, ecumenism, I think I'm correct in saying, ecos means, is it world?

Or is it house? I better, I better not start that sentence, if I don't know how to finish it. Okay.

Ecumenism is the idea of having one worldwide church, that we all belong together in one worldwide church.

And there used to be a thing called the ecumenical movement, which said, we're all, we're all, all Christians are the same, all churches are the same, and we've all split up, and we all just need to get back together again.

[25:38] And you find, in, in, in the sort of 1960s and 70s, it was, it was a big thing. Nowadays, it tends to be watered down, or diluted down, to the churches together.

You find churches together, would be a sort of ecumenical thing. So, all the churches join in with this, Rome Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans, they're all, because we're all Christians together. And they would use this, these texts to say, one, they're all one, it's important that they all be one. But what I want to say is, let's just be very careful, on the use of, oneness language, because Jesus uses it, in a very, unusual way, which we'll see in a moment.

Another thing about this oneness, is that the oneness, comes from, the definition of these people, which was, that they, believe, in the apostolic word.

So, ecumenicity, tends to be put in, let's not bother with doctrines, let's not bother with, theology, theology just, confuses people, and, alienates people, and it's all just to do, with the mind, and words.

[27:00] Let's not bother with that, we'd just be one. And that's alive, and well in Brighton. But the oneness of this, is a oneness, that comes from, believing in the apostolic word.

To my mind, if we're going to be one, with other believers, all in favor of that, but let's, make sure that we all, believe the same word. I don't think that, has to be complicated.

I don't think we have to, just to copy out, every single thing, that every apostle said, because it has a main point, and main points. I think we would, say the apostolic word says, God is Trinity, God is the creator, God is sovereign, God is holy, it says that.

It says that Jesus, is the son of God, that Jesus is God and man, that when he died on the cross, he died, bearing the wrath of God, for our sins, and that we're to receive this, by faith, and that if we, that we must be born again, and so on, these just basic fundamental ideas, of the apostolic word. So I'm just, this is a little bit about, I don't think, this text teaches, ecumenicity, it teaches, gospel unity. So that was one thing.

[28:19] Now let's come to the word one. Right, verse 21, all of them may be one, just as, okay, there's a number of just as's, in John's gospel, and here's a just as.

What is it, just as, just as what? Just as you are in me, and I am in you.

It's a very strange definition, of being one, isn't it? I wish I hadn't, obliterated my notes, because I, I wrote this down quite carefully.

Yeah, it's something like that, but let's, let's, let's do it this way. So the father, is in the son, and the son, is in the father. That's his definition, of being one.

So, I think we could say, something like this, that the father, is in the son. So when we look at the son, we see, something of the father.

[29:35] And the son, is in the father. So the son, is not like a remote satellite, the father's over there, and the son is, way over here, doing some different things, but the son is right, in the father.

And he says, that he wants, the disciples, to be one, just as you, are in me, and I am in you, may they also, be in us.

So he says, may these people, be in, the father, and the son. At which point, I get defeated.

I don't think I can, spell it out, much further. Apart from to say, that if we're in, the father, and the son, it's not like, the father, and the son over there, and we're remote satellites, just, miles away, spinning around, in our own, empty space, but that our lives, are in, the father, and the son.

I've got a text, for that. And, the father, and the son, are in us, in the sense, that, if people, look at us, there is an, indwelling, life, which, might be seen, the life, of God, in his people.

[31:14] I think, that's what Jesus, is, is getting at. We would pray, for numbers. More people, please, Lord. But, Jesus says, I want them, to be one, in this sense, that, I am in them, they are in us.

That's, it's, it's, it's not, an organizational, thing, it's, something else. Please look at, Colossians chapter, three.

Colossians chapter, three page number, 1184. Colossians chapter, three.

This is Paul, this time, putting it, in a Paul, sort of way. Since then, you have been raised, with Christ, set your hearts, on things above, where Christ, is seated, at the right hand, of God.

Set your minds, on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life, is now hidden, with Christ, in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, you also, will appear, with him, in glory.

[32:51] I want to, pick out, that one thought there. Where, where are we? Where is our life? And you might say, my life is here, in Brighton, or my life, is in Seaford, or my life, is in London, or wherever it is, you feel your life, is based.

But he says, if you're a Christian, verse, chapter 3, verse 3, your life, is now hidden, with Christ, in God.

That's a remarkable, statement, isn't it? Where are you, believer? Well, I'd really well feel, as though I'm sitting, on a chair here, in Preston Circus. And God says, actually, I want you to believe me, in this, that I've changed you, in such a way, that your life, is hidden, with Christ, in God.

And you say, I can't see that, to be honest. I can see my sin, I can see how, how confused I get.

And notice the word, hidden. It's not, a very obvious thing.

In some ways, it's a hidden thing. And in some ways, it's a thing, hidden from us. It's something, that we see, by faith, at this moment.

[34:13] And I think, that's, no, have we got the faith, to believe that? That's what it says. It's to do, really, at the level of being. Who are we?

Where are we? Where do we belong? Where is our life? Your life, is hidden, with Christ, in God. It's a bit, wow, isn't it?

Wow. And then he says, but it won't always, be hidden. But when Christ, who is your life, appears, then you, you also, will appear, with him, in glory.

There's a sense, in which this, hiddenness, which is the situation, that we are now in, will, be transformed, into a revelation.

It will, appear, what, we truly are, and always have been, in Christ, but we couldn't see it.

[35:17] I think, C.S. Lewis says, something like this. Here I am risking, another quote, can I finish it. He says, we're all in the process, of becoming, either, something, so hideous, and awful, that we would scream, in alarm, if we knew, could see, what that person, really was becoming.

Or we are becoming, through Christ, something so glorious, and so radiant, and so brilliant, that you would almost, worship the person, sitting next to you.

when Christ, who is your life, appears, you also, will appear, with him, in glory. Let's go back, to John chapter 17, and I will, stop in a minute.

I think that, he says, the same sort of thing, in the middle, of verse 22, I have given them, the glory, that you gave me, that they may be one, just as we are one, I in them, you in me, and then this phrase, may they be brought, to complete unity, or may they be finished, into one.

And I'm going to say, I don't think I understand, I don't think I'm able, to tell you any more, than I've already said. Except that this, oneness, uses, using the language, of unity, and using the language, of sort of, interpenetration, the father in me, I in the father, them in me, I in them, it's using this language, I think to express, the, a oneness, in, the benefits, and, the, the blessings, of belonging to God.

[37:26] It's not just, an organizational unity, but it's a, a oneness, which draws from, what it is, to be in God, what it is to be, in the father, and the son. And his, this, this phrase, which I confess, I don't, fully understand, I just point us, in the direction, may they be, may this, be a process, which comes to a conclusion, when they completely, have, all that is, in the father, and the son, may they be brought, finished, into one.

Okay, I'm just going to pause, and say, there is, there are some future references, there are some present references, this verse, verse 23, to my mind, appears to talk about, a process, which has a present aspect, and a future aspect, so it can't be all in the future, because, this, says something to the world, am I right?

Verse 23, may they, da da da da da, so that the world, may know that you sent me, so there must be something, that the world sees, but it does seem to be, a process that goes on, may they be completed, in this, that's all I can say, because I'm baffled, to say anymore, but let me, let's finish by looking, at verse 24, this is a future, aspect of this prayer, Father, I, I want those, you have given me, can I just stop and say, there is such a repetition, of giving, this is all to do, with the father's giving, and the son's giving, in fact, this should be like, founding on a, a giving economy, an economy of generosity, and one of the things, that are given is people, in, in, Paul would say election, he would say, you've chosen these people, John says given, and it isn't just, the apostles who were given, it's the disciples as well, isn't it, they are given, to the father, given to Jesus, by the father,

I want those, you've given me, to be with me, where I am, to see my glory, the glory, you have given me, because you loved me, before the creation, of the world, so, just, say a couple of words, about this, what is Jesus praying for, he's saying, I want these people, father, I want these people, to get there, and I want, them to get there, and be, absolutely, amazed, when they arrive, so, I want them, to see my glory, I think, I'm overusing this word, but it is an amazing thing, isn't it, that Jesus, should say, I want you, I've got something, in store for you, and this is the best thing, that I could, anybody could ever wish for you, I want you to see, who I really am, I want you to see, says Jesus, my glory, I do, I want you to be, I mean, have you ever invited, somebody around, to your house, to see, I don't know, your fishing, collection, or your, I don't know, ceramics, or something, I'd like you to come, and see my, my garden, I don't know, I really would like you, to come and see it, because, I want to share that with you, and Jesus says, I want these people, to come, to my house, to my father's house, there's many rooms, in my father's house, I want them to get there, and I want them, to see my glory, that's a prayer, that Jesus prayed, and, it deserves, unpacking, doesn't it, I'm not going to, unpack it, this evening, but when Jesus, prays this sort of prayer, he isn't saying, oh it would be really nice, but I don't think, it's ever going to happen, it'd be nice, for me to learn, to play the banjo, that my family, so kindly gave me, whether it will ever happen, is another question,

[41:44] I'd like it, but, but this isn't a, a sort of, it'd be nice, but it's never going to happen, prayer is it, it's, it's a very specific, declaration by Jesus, this is what I want, I will, Father, I will, that those you have given me, be with me, where I am, to see my glory, the glory you gave me, because you loved me, before the creation, of the world, what can you say, and comment to that, that's what Jesus, prayed for us, if you want to put it, into a theological category, it's the category, of perseverance, it says, that Jesus says, these people, will make it, they will last, they will persevere, and it isn't because, they're very tenacious, sort of people, you know, I've chosen people, very stickable, he says,

I've been given them, and Father, I want them to be there, I don't want a single, one of those people, to be lost, that's what I want, and it's a prayer, it isn't, a nice, if it happens, sort of, it's, that's what's going to be, to see my glory, verse 25, says, righteous Father, though the world, does not

know you, I know you, and they know, that you have sent me, I have made you known, to them, and will continue, to make you known, in order that the love, you have for me, may be in them, and that I myself, may be in them, and I'll only make this comment, that we had, past tenses, we've got a future reference, and this is the one, that is a sort of, ongoing one, it says in verse 26, I've made you known, to them, and as day, passes day, and event, passes event,

I will continue, to make, your name, known to those people, I think that's, a very, encouraging, statement, by Jesus, what's Jesus doing, at this present time, well, the present reference, is this, I'm continuing, to make, literally, your name, known, to these people, that's right, isn't it, verse 26, I made you known, past tense, and will continue, to make you known, I have made it known, what is it, it's actually your name, Jesus is telling us, what is he in the business, of doing, continuing, to make, known, to us, the name of God, I'm so grateful, for that, because if it was up to me, to keep clear, in my own mind, the name of God,

I think I'd, very quickly, forget, wouldn't you, I don't know, maybe it's just me, very quickly, be distracted, very quickly, be looking at emails, instead, no hang on, you're supposed to be, thinking about, but Jesus says, I'm making it my business, to make known, to these, and to continue, to make known, to them, the name of God, what is the name, of God, the name of God, is who God is, what his character is, what his purposes are, what he's up to, what he likes, what he hates, who he is, I'm making him known, to these people.