

What is Jesus doing right now?

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo Campbell

- [0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read in the Gospel according to John, and chapter 17.
- John chapter 17, I'd like us in many ways to walk through the whole chapter, but if we just read again from the beginning. John 17 and verse 1.
- When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.
- Glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you. Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that the Son may glorify you.
- I want to begin this evening by asking the question, what is Jesus doing right now? What is Jesus doing right now?
- [1 : 1 1] Do you know, when we consider the Old Testament, we often think about what Jesus promised to do. Jesus was the promised prophet. He was the seed of the woman who would come and crush the head of the serpent.
- Jesus was the promised priest who would act as the suffering servant to be wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Jesus was also the promised king who would establish his kingdom and rule in this world.
- When we consider the Old Testament, we often think about what Jesus promised to do. And when we consider the New Testament, we often think about what Jesus did in the past when he lived.
- We think about his birth and his baptism and his life and his ministry. We think about Jesus' miracles, his miracles of healing the sick or calming storms or feeding thousands or raising the dead.
- When we think about the New Testament, we often think about what Jesus did and we think about why Jesus came, that he came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.
- [2 : 2 0] My friend, when we think of Jesus, we often think about what Jesus promised to do. And we think about what Jesus did. But the question I want us to ask this evening is, what is Jesus doing right now?
- What is Jesus doing right now? Because as we all know, the cross wasn't the end of the story. Jesus was laid in a borrowed tomb.
- And on the third day, he rose again triumphant over the grave. Death couldn't hold him. The grave couldn't keep him. And the angels proclaimed about him, he is not here, for he is risen.
- Jesus, as the Bible affirms to us, Jesus is risen and he is ascended to the right hand of the Father. And your Bible will tell you tonight that it was for the joy that was set before him, that he endured the cross, despising the shame.
- And he's now seated at the right hand of the throne of God. But what is Jesus doing at the right hand of the throne of God? What is Jesus doing right now, tonight?

[3 : 33] What is Jesus doing right now? My friend, Jesus is praying for you right now. Jesus is praying for you right now.

Our great high priest who offered himself as a sacrifice at Calvary, he now offers supplication in heaven. Our great high priest who offered himself as a sacrifice at Calvary, he now offers supplication for us in heaven.

But you know, what is Jesus praying about? If Jesus is praying right now, what is he praying about? Well, I want to suggest to you this evening that even though this high priestly prayer of John 17, even though it was prayed on earth, in many ways I believe that it's a prayer that is still being spoken in heaven.

What is Jesus doing right now? He's praying for you. And he's praying, we'll see four things. He's praying for your salvation, your safety, your sanctification, and your security.

What is Jesus doing right now? He's praying for your salvation, your safety, your sanctification, and your security. What is Jesus doing right now?

[5 : 00] First of all, we see that he's praying for your salvation. He's praying for your salvation. Look again at verse one. When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify your son, that the son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only through God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Now these words, they were first spoken in the garden of Gethsemane. Only hours before Jesus would be crucified on a Roman cross. And when these words were first uttered from the lips of Jesus, they were uttered with such intensity, that the gospel writers tell us, that Jesus sweated great drops of blood.

Because these words, as we know, they're words of intercession. Where Jesus is praying for you. My friend, Jesus is praying for you.

And I say that he's praying for you. Because you know, and as you should know, Jesus deals with us all very personally, and individually, and intimately.

[6 : 20] And I want you to see that. That when Jesus is praying, he's praying for you personally. And he's praying for you, because he's your great high priest.

That's why John 17 has often been regarded as the high priestly prayer of Jesus. Because Jesus is praying for you, as your great high priest.

And you know, it's always a great comfort and encouragement to be told by someone that they're praying for you, isn't it? That you're on their mind, and you're on their heart, and that you're in their prayers.

And you know, it's wonderful to know that you're being brought before the Lord in prayer. And my friend, if the Lord has put someone in your heart, and you're praying for them, and they're on your mind, tell them.

Tell them that you're praying for them. Let them know that you're praying for them, because what greater encouragement for that person, when they might be at their lowest, and their weakest, and their most vulnerable.

[7 : 22] What greater encouragement than to be told that you're praying for them. But you know what's so beautiful about this chapter, is that you're being reminded that Jesus is praying for you.

Jesus is praying for you. You know, it's one thing to be told that other people in the congregation are praying for you. But it's another thing completely to know that Jesus, our great high priest, is praying for you.

Because you know, those around you tonight, those whom you're sitting beside, those who are even in your own home, and in your own family, they might not know, what's going on in your heart, and in your life, and what you're going through.

And yet the wonderful thing is, this Jesus does. This Jesus knows exactly, what's going on in your heart, and in your life, and what you're going through. And the assurance tonight is, that he's praying for you.

He's praying for you. And the first thing Jesus prays for, is your salvation. That's his priority. Do you know my unconverted friend here tonight, Jesus' priority, is your salvation.

[8 : 34] Because Jesus wants you to be saved. The Bible affirms to you, that he's not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance. And tonight, Jesus is praying for your salvation.

Jesus is praying that you'd loosen your grip of the world, and commit your life to him. Jesus is praying that you'd come, and take up your cross, and follow him tonight.

Jesus is praying for your salvation. Why? Because your salvation will glorify him. You know, when you're saved, you don't get the glory.

He gets the glory. That's what Jesus prays. He says, glorify your son, that the son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

And this is eternal life, that they know that you are the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. My friend, what glorifies Jesus most?

[9 : 43] Sinners being saved through his sacrifice. What glorifies Jesus most, is sinners coming to a saving knowledge, of Jesus Christ.

That's what brings Jesus the glory. Your salvation will bring Jesus glory. That's why he's praying for your salvation. But you know, my unconverted friend, I wonder, as we mentioned this morning, do you pray for your own salvation?

Do you ask the Lord to forgive you? Do you ask the Lord to save you? Do you ask the Lord to cleanse you? Do you ask the Lord to wash you, and make you his? Do you pray for your own salvation?

Because when Jesus prayed for your salvation, he prayed fervently. He prayed earnestly. He prayed sincerely. But here's a question for you tonight, my unconverted friend.

Do you pray fervently for your salvation? Do you pray earnestly, asking the Lord to save you? Do you sincerely plead with the Lord, to have mercy upon you?

[10 : 52] Are you praying like the publican, in that parable that Jesus told? God be merciful to me, a sinner. Are you sincere, when you're praying to the Lord?

Because that's what Jesus was doing. Of course, just because Jesus is praying for your salvation, it doesn't mean that you don't have to. No, you have to fervently, earnestly, sincerely, and wholeheartedly pray, for your own salvation.

Asking the Lord, to create within you, a clean heart. But you know, I love what the writer to the Hebrews says, about Jesus as our great high priest.

Because we're told that Jesus is the high priest, who's seated at the right hand of the throne, of the majesty in heaven. And the writer to the Hebrews says, since we have a great high priest, who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

For we do not have a high priest, who is not touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but it was in all points, tempted as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, he says, therefore, let us come boldly.

[12 : 07] Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive what? Mercy. And find what? Grace. To help in our time of need.

Do you know, my unconverted friend, it's because Jesus is in heaven, praying for your salvation, that you're invited to come tonight, with boldness, to his throne.

To his throne. And you're invited to come and find mercy, and saving grace, to help in your time of need.

And you know, because you're invited to come, the writer to the Hebrews, assures you of this wonderful promise. He says, Jesus is a rewarder, of those who diligently seek him.

He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Jesus will reward you, if you tonight, fervently, earnestly, sincerely, and wholeheartedly seek him.

[13 : 11] And that's a promise, not only for the unconverted, but for all of the Lord's people. Because the beauty of salvation is, that, Jesus, his reach, he is able to save to the uttermost, all those who come to him, who draw near to him.

Why? Because, as the writer to the Hebrews reminds us, he ever lives, to make intercession for us. He ever lives, to make intercession for us.

My friend, Jesus ever lives, to be your great high priest, and to pray for your salvation. And tonight, Jesus is praying for your salvation. But you also need to pray, for your salvation.

And you know, the wonderful thing about salvation is, that salvation is threefold. It's past, present, and future. Because you're saved, you're being saved, and you will be saved.

You're saved when you're converted. When you become a Christian, you're being saved. My Christian friend, tonight you're being saved. But your salvation is not complete yet.

[14 : 23] And it will not be complete, until your body is raised, out of its grave. And united to soul, at the resurrection, to go in, to the full enjoying of God, to all eternity.

And you know, that's what Jesus prays for. We'll see that more later on. But that's what Jesus is praying for. He's praying for your salvation. And it's a complete salvation. Where you're saved, being saved, and will be saved.

In glory. So he's praying for your salvation. But then secondly, we see, what Jesus is doing right now, is that he's praying for your safety.

What is Jesus doing right now? He's praying for your safety. Look at verse 9. Jesus says, I am praying for them.

I'm not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me. For they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.

[15 : 29] Holy Father, keep them. Keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me.

I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost, except the son of destruction, that the scripture might be fulfilled. And you know, it's often said that the first step after being saved is being kept.

The first step after being saved is being kept. And that's what we see here, that the first prayer of Jesus after someone is saved, after you're saved, is that you're kept.

Jesus says, Holy Father, keep them. Holy Father, keep them in your name. Jesus is praying for your safety.

He's praying that you will be kept. And you know, it's wonderful to be assured that Jesus is praying for your salvation, but it's amazing to know that when you're saved, when you're a Christian, Jesus is praying that you'll be kept.

[16 : 41] And you know, my unconverted friend, I sometimes think, well, maybe this is why you hesitate committing your life to Jesus Christ.

Because you know that you need to be saved. You don't deny that. Else, why are you here tonight? But you hesitate. You're reticent, because you think that if you begin the Christian life, you won't last.

You worry that, well, if you come out on the side of the Lord, you might let people down in the years to come. Or you'll let the Lord down. Or you'll fail.

Or you'll backslide. And maybe for that reason, you hesitate, and you go on halting between two opinions. You know, I spoke to someone not so long ago about the importance of running the Christian race.

And we talked about how good it is to run the Christian race. But in order to run the Christian race, the most important part is starting the Christian race.

[17 : 47] The person I was talking to thought that the most important part would be finishing the Christian race. But you know, the most important part is starting the Christian race. Not only because you have to start the race in order to finish it.

But you know, the assurance that the Bible gives to us and that Jesus prays for us is that when you start the race, it's Jesus who promises to bring you to the finish line.

When you start the Christian race, it's Jesus that takes you to the finish line. Because you know, my friend, you won't get there by your own efforts. You won't get there by your own works.

You won't get there by your own ability to grow in grace. You will only reach the end of your Christian race because you've been kept. And that's what Jesus prays here.

He prays that for everyone who starts the Christian race, Jesus prays that they'll be kept all the way through to the finish line. But my friend, you've got to start the race in order to finish it.

[18 : 54] You've got to come out on the side of the Lord. You've got to confess Jesus as your Savior. You've got to start the race in order to finish it. And Jesus promises you that when you start, you'll be kept all the way to the finish line.

Isn't that the case, my Christian friend? You are kept every step of the race. But you know, when Jesus prays that you'll be kept, he doesn't pray that you'll be kept from trouble.

No. Because Jesus never said that the Christian life was going to be a trouble-free life. And that when you're a Christian, Jesus doesn't say that you'll be kept from illness and you'll be kept from loss and you'll be kept from family problems or you'll be kept from financial difficulty or you'll be kept from difficulties in your own experience.

No. Jesus says when you're a Christian, he doesn't promise promotion. He doesn't promise position. He doesn't even promise prosperity. But what Jesus does promise is that you'll be protected.

He promises you that you'll be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Is that not what Peter told the early church? He says, you trust in this Jesus and you'll be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation until you are revealed at the last time.

[20 : 25] My friend, when you're a Christian, Jesus doesn't promise that you'll be kept from things. Jesus promises that you'll be kept in things. He doesn't promise that you'll be kept from all sins and sicknesses and sufferings and sorrows.

But he promises you that he will keep you and uphold you and watch over you. You'll be kept and you'll be kept as we're reminded in this passage because of the prayers of our great high priest, Jesus Christ.

Christ. And that's what Jesus prays, that those who are running the Christian race, those who are Christians united to Jesus Christ by faith, he says they will be kept.

He says in verse 9, I'm praying for them. I'm not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours and yours are mine.

And I am glorified in them. I'm no longer in the world, but they are in the world. And I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

[21 : 34] And you know, my friend, what Jesus prays for you is that you'll be kept from the temptations of the world. And you'll be kept from the temptations of the devil.

He says down in verse 14, I have given them your word. The world has hated them because they're not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.

Jesus prays that you'll be kept from the temptations of the world and the temptations of the devil. But you know, what I find so comforting about Jesus' high priestly prayer is that he'll be, he promises and he prays that we will be kept and guarded and not one of his will be lost.

He prays that we will be kept and guarded and not one of his will be lost. He says in verse 12, while I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me.

I have guarded them and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction. But you know, what's even more comforting is that Jesus' prayer for us to be kept, it's the same prayer that the psalmist had in the well-known psalm of Psalm 121.

[22 : 55] In fact, as we said earlier, Psalm 121 is the keeper's psalm because throughout the psalm, the psalmist is praying that the Lord would keep him. And that's what we saw earlier as we were singing it.

The psalmist, he looked beyond the hills of this world and he looked to the one who was seated in heaven and he confessed, he confessed that the Lord Jesus Christ is the maker of heaven and earth.

But more than that, the psalmist, he affirmed that throughout his wilderness journey, the one who keeps us, he never slumbers. He never sleeps.

All because the Lord is our keeper. The Lord is our keeper. But more than that, the psalmist assures us of the promise that the Lord will keep you from all evil.

He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and even forevermore. And that's what Jesus is praying for you.

[23 : 57] He's praying that you'll be kept. Are you kept, my friend? Do you know the keeping of the Lord?

Are you being kept? It's wonderful to know when you're being kept by the Lord. You know, I love the language that Jesus uses here and even the psalmist in Psalm 121 because it's all shepherd language.

It's all shepherd language. The words keep, guard, and watch. It's what a shepherd does, isn't it? It's what a shepherd does with his flock. And needless to say, that's what the good shepherd does with his flock.

Because as Jesus reminds us in John 10, he says about his sheep, my sheep, all they're purchased. My sheep, they are protected.

Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give to them eternal life and they will never perish.

[25 : 10] Neither shall they be plucked out of my hand. My friend, Jesus affirms that his flock are purchased and protected because they're prayed for. And you know, as the good shepherd Jesus is praying that all those who confess with David in Psalm 23, all those who say the Lord is my shepherd, they're assured of the shepherd's goodness and mercy following them all the days of their life.

And that's what Jesus is praying for. He's praying for your safety. He's praying that you'll be kept. Do you know, do you know this shepherd?

Do you know this good shepherd? Because you know there's no one as good as this good shepherd. This shepherd promises to keep you.

From the moment you confess him as Lord, he promises to keep you. You're going out and you're coming in. He promises that goodness and mercy will follow you all the days of your life.

And he will keep you until in God's house forevermore your dwelling place shall be. That's what Jesus is praying for.

[26 : 30] That you'll be kept. What is Jesus doing right now? My friend, as your great high priest in heaven, Jesus is praying for your salvation. He's praying for your safety.

And then thirdly, he's praying for your sanctification. He's praying for your sanctification. Look at verse 17. Jesus prays, sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.

You know, isn't it amazing to know that your great high priest is not only praying for your salvation and your safety, but he's also praying for your sanctification.

Jesus is praying in heaven tonight that you will be prepared for heaven. Jesus is praying in heaven that you will be prepared for heaven.

[27 : 37] Because that's what the purpose of sanctification is. It's to sanctify you. It's to make you more holy. It's to make you fit for heaven.

But you know, when we consider sanctification, we must remember that sanctification is twofold. Sanctification is positional and progressive.

Sanctification is positional and progressive. Positional sanctification is when you're saved. You're set apart. You're made holy. You're positionally moved from being lost to being found.

From being unsaved to being saved. From being in Adam to being in Christ. From being children of wrath to the children of God. From being hell bound to being on the road to glory.

That's what it means to be positionally sanctified. Your position changes. You're set apart. You're called out. You become part of the church.

[28 : 41] You're made holy. You're claimed as a saint. But what Jesus prays here is not only praying for your positional sanctification. He's also praying for your progressive sanctification.

sanctification. Because as someone who has been positionally sanctified, as someone who is a Christian tonight, Jesus is praying that you will progress in your sanctification.

Jesus, your great high priest in heaven, he is praying that you will be prepared for heaven. Because my Christian friend, that's where we're going.

this world is not our home. We are just a passing through. And let's remember that.

Jesus is in heaven tonight praying that you'll be prepared for heaven. Was that not what he promised the disciples? In that upper room discourse, Jesus said to them, I go to prepare a place for you.

[29 : 45] My friend, Jesus is preparing a place for you in heaven. heaven. But tonight through his word, he's preparing you for that place. He's preparing you for heaven.

And as you know, sanctification is often compared to what we would call a refining process. In which gold is refined by removing all the dross and all the impurities of the metal until the pure element of gold is left.

And that's what Jesus does with us in sanctification. He removes all the dross and all the impurities which hinder us and make us sinful and unholy. And he gradually and progressively removes all these things in order to present us faultless before his glory with exceeding joy.

But as Jesus prays here, he says, the only way to be sanctified sanctified is through the truth. He says in verse 17, sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. And when Jesus prays that we must be sanctified through the truth, the truth is not relative truth. The truth is not what we think or what I think and what I say or what I feel is the truth or this is my interpretation.

[31 : 15] No, the truth is the absolute truth of God's word. The absolute truth can only be founded in the word of God because it's the absolute truth of God's word that sets before us ethics to live by and an example to follow.

The absolute truth of God's word sets before us ethics to live by and an example to follow which is why Jesus is praying for us to spend our time investing in the word of God and even imitating the word of God.

Sanctify them through the truth. Your word is truth. But you know what's more is that Jesus affirms in verse 19 that he too has been set apart in order that we will be sanctified.

He says in verse 19 he says and for their sake I consecrate myself I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Jesus is affirming to us that his role as our great high priest in heaven is to ensure that you are sanctified. That's his role.

[32 : 30] Jesus says that he has been set apart by his father to pray for you and to pray that you will be prepared for heaven.

That's what Jesus is doing right now. Jesus is praying for your positional sanctification. He's praying for your progressive sanctification.

Jesus is praying for your sanctification and as the catechism reminds us your progressive sanctification is a work of God's free grace whereby you are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness.

Jesus is praying in heaven that you will be prepared for heaven. What is Jesus doing right now? My friend as your great high priest Jesus is praying for your salvation.

He's praying for your safety. He's praying for your sanctification. And lastly and briefly Jesus is praying for your security. He's praying for your security.

[33 : 41] Look at verse 24. Jesus prays Father I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory.

To see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. you know what I love about this high priestly prayer of Jesus is that it's complete.

Because Jesus' prayer for you isn't just that a good work will begin in your life. Jesus' prayer for you is that that good work will be brought on to its completion.

And is that not what Paul said about the work of Jesus? He who begins a good work in you he promises he will bring it on to completion when?

At the day of Christ Jesus when you stand before him in glory. And that's why Jesus is praying he's praying not only for your salvation and your safety and your sanctification Jesus is praying tonight for your security your eternal security.

[34 : 55] My Christian friend here tonight Jesus is praying that when all is said and done you will arrive in glory. That when you close your eyes on this world and faith finally gives way to sight you will see him and you will be like him.

That's what Jesus is praying for. You've been saved you've been saved you're being saved and you will be saved. That you'll stand before him in glory.

That's what he says. Father I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you love me before the foundation of the world.

Jesus is praying that you'll not only see through a glass darkly but that you'll see him face to face. and you know we can have confidence and assurance that we will arrive in glory.

Why? Because not one of Jesus' prayers have gone unanswered. You know when we look at the life of Jesus we see that Jesus prayed that the sick would be healed and they were.

[36 : 17] Jesus prayed that the dead would be raised and they were. Jesus prayed that he would be glorified on the cross and he was. Jesus prayed father forgive them for they know not what they do and they were forgiven.

Jesus prayed for the apostles to be kept and they were. Jesus prayed that the church would flourish throughout the world and it has. Every single prayer of Jesus has been answered because he always prayed in accordance with the will of his father.

And my Christian friend that will certainly be true of this prayer and your eternal security. Do you know my Christian friend Jesus prayed that you will be saved and tonight you are saved.

Jesus tonight is praying for your safety and you are being kept. Jesus is praying for your sanctification and it is progressing.

You might not think it's progressing much but I assure you it's progressing because it's his work. And Jesus tonight is praying for your eternal security and he promises he promises to bring you home to glory.

[37 : 43] I go to prepare a place for you said Jesus and if I go I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.

There you may be also. Jesus is praying that you will come home to be with him. This is not your final resting place.

The best is yet to come. You know my friend there's so much more that could be said about this high priestly prayer in John 17.

In many ways we're just scratching the surface. But what I want you to take home with you this evening is the knowledge and the assurance that whatever you may be going through tonight whatever providence is in your experience whatever trial you are facing whatever joy whatever sorrow be assured that Jesus is praying for you right now.

What is Jesus doing right now? He's praying for your salvation your safety your sanctification and your security.

[39 : 11] peace be comforted my friend while the world might not pray for you be assured that this great high priest makes continual intercession for you.

May the Lord bless these thoughts to us and let us pray. Amen.