

**John 17:6-21**  
**Jesus Prays for Us**

**6** "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.

**7** Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.

**8** For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

**9** I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

**10** All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them.

**11** I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

**12** While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

**13** "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

**14** I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

**15** My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

**16** They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

**17** Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

**18** As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

**19** For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

**20** "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

**21** 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.

Good Morning My Sisters and Brothers in Christ, I greet you this morning in the name of God the Father; Jesus, His Son; and the Holy Spirit our Comforter. I pray that this past week has provided you with time to think and reflect and perhaps to even pray with **Shameless Audacity**. Others have brought it to my attention that every time they hear me pray aloud I begin with thanksgiving. My first instinct was to ask, "don't you?" But as a dear friend has taught me sometimes you just need to think before you speak... so I acknowledge the comment about my prayer practices and I move on. But this week as I thought about the time I spend with God and the time I spend on other things I became more mindful than ever that the prayer that I pray **has, must, will** have a time for thanksgiving.

I am thankful for the life I have been allowed to live. I am thankful for the congregation called FBCPF and the special relationships God has allowed. I am thankful for my biological family because they contribute to the person I am this day. I could go on and on. But the point I want to bring to your attention is that regardless of what is happening in your life there is still a reason to pray and that prayer ought to contain some thanksgiving.

As you are aware the morning sermon is guided by the scripture text for the Adult Sunday School lesson. For the entire month of January we are talking about praying to the Lord. On 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday we considered the "Lord's Prayer" as recorded in the gospel of Luke. This prayer taught by Jesus to His disciples is a prayer model for us to follow. In other words a guide or as my friend Rev. Rudy Howard has said; it is just the warm-up!

Today we are challenged to consider the prayer Jesus prayed as He prepared to go to the cross.

The Inter-Varsity Press Commentary outlines the prayer in this way:

*Jesus begins with **a petition** for the glorification of the Father and the Son (vv. 1-5), after which he prays for the disciples gathered around him, **first** describing their situation (vv. 6-11) **and then** praying that they be protected and sanctified by God (vv. 11-19). Jesus **then prays** for all who will become believers through the witness of the eleven, that they may share in the divine oneness (vv. 20-24). He concludes with a summary of his past and future work (vv. 25-26).<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+17&version=NIV>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12&version=NIV>

Allow me to state the obvious and then come back and work out the finer points. Jesus was born to die! He knew it! He knew that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him. He knew that He would rise from the death, hang around on earth for a little while longer and then **RETURN** to the Father who had sent Him. He knew all of this and yet Jesus, the only begotten Son of the Father, in His fully human and fully divine self **prayed**. He prayed to his Father as He began the transformation that He had been born for. Well, if Jesus had to pray and He knew beyond a shadow of a doubt who He was, and where He would spend eternity it just makes sense to me that prayer is essential to transformation.

As we move into our teaching moment I ask you to pray with me and for me as I work with this title:

### **Transformation Requires Prayer**

#### **SHALL WE PRAY!**

Father God we come before your throne of grace, asking to be allowed into your presence. We **need** to hear from you and we **are asking** to hear from you. Send us the message and the 21<sup>st</sup> century application for the passage before us. As we seek to be **Transformed by the Holy Spirit into a Church United**, a shining beacon on a hill, a church that you will not spit out of your mouth because it is lukewarm, we ask with shameless audacity for your help. Abba, I need you **(I don't have to say it out loud, you know)** to help me to do, to the best of my ability, that which you have called me to do. **(I am not asking to preach like Peter or evangelize like Paul, just let me be the best me I can be.)** Mold me, fill me and use me for the people you have assigned to my hand. In the name of Jesus the Christ I pray. AMEN and AMEN.

### **Transformation Requires Prayer**

For the past few years we have been using an annual theme of Transformation by the Spirit, in keeping with our denominational focus. We have asked God to transform our spirits around the activities of prayer, stewardship and evangelism, and in the midst of our evangelism year we added a request to be transformed in the way we care for our temples, the body God has given us. We thank RUSH and the ALIVE team for including us in this initiative. Yet, as I considered all that we have been working on I wonder how much thought has been given to the need for prayer as we seek transformation.

Let me try it again! People don't like change; people resist and fight change yet if we are to become disciples of the Most High God we have to change. We have to change because we were born with a sinful nature and we wish to have a God like nature. Listen to what Paul says:

*<sup>2</sup>Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.<sup>2</sup>*

### **Transformation Requires Prayer**

As Jesus prepared for the cross He prayed. His prayer has teaching points that I believe are worthy of our consideration. Look with me at vv 20-21:

<sup>20</sup> "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 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.

### **Transformation Requires Prayer**

#### **Question #1 Who did Jesus pray for?**

*"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message*

#### **Explanation**

Jesus prayed for the disciples – Jesus prayed for those who would believe what the disciples would teach – the message Jesus had given them – that means Jesus was praying for you and for me and all those that we would bring to Him through our message.

#### **APPLICATION**

***Who are you praying for? What is your message?***

#### **Question #2 What did Jesus pray for?**

*... that all of them may be one,*

#### **Explanation**

We are not called to be alike for Paul teaches us that we have each been given different gifts and we are to exercise the gifts we have been given for the kingdom of God. However, we **are called to be united** in the efforts that we

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+12&version=NIV>

have agreed to as a congregation. There was only one lone wolf among the twelve:

*None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*

The remaining disciples and those who would follow worked as a team and acknowledged a leader among them. We are called to do likewise:

*<sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace<sup>3</sup>*

### **APPLICATION**

**When was the last time you prayed for unity, and peace within FBCPF?  
When was the last time you asked the Holy Spirit to help you be the peace that was needed in your home, your church, your place of business and the world?**

### **Question #3 Why did Jesus pray what he prayed?**

*...Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.  
May they also be in us*

*<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.<sup>4</sup>*

### **APPLICATION**

**Are you praying that God binds us together?  
Are you praying for what we need or what you want?  
Are you praying for those outside of the will of God?**

### **Question #4 Where is our responsibility in this prayer?**

I pray also for those who will believe in me through their **message**,  
*...faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4&version=NIV>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4&version=NIV>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+10&version=NIV>

## **APPLICATION**

**What is your message?**

**What are you demonstrating by your actions?**

**Are you praying for those who have fallen off the path?**

### **Question #5 How will we be able to carry out our responsibility?**

<sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

## **APPLICATION**

**Remember the devil is real and that you need to ask God to help you see the devil and also protect you from the devil.**

## **CONCLUSION**

### **APPLICATION**

***Who are you praying for? What is your message?***

***When was the last time you prayed for unity, and peace within FBCPF?***

***When was the last time you asked the Holy Spirit to help you be the peace that was needed in your home, your church, your place of business and the world?***

**Are you praying that God binds us together?**

**Are you praying for what we need or what you want?**

**Are you praying for those outside of the will of God?**

**What is your message?**

**What are you demonstrating by your actions?**

**Are you praying for those who have fallen off the path?**

At our next Leadership Council meeting I will propose as our theme for 2015:

**Transformed by the Holy Spirit into a Church United**