

# John 17 - Jesus Christ's prayer for believers

## JOHN 12:1-8 MARY'S LOVE FOR JESUS SETS THE SCENE

Six days prior to his crucifixion was an event that set the context for what was to follow. Mary's anointing of Jesus is also recorded in **Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:1-11**. Mary poured spikenard on Jesus' head acknowledging he was **high priest: Lev 8:12; Psalms 133:1-3; Song 1:3; Mt 26:7; Mk 14:3**.



She also anointed his feet to show he was **king: Song 1:12; Jn 12:3**. The house was filled with the fragrance of the spikenard. God's house (the *ecclesia*) through the ages has smelt the sweet fragrance of her love and has been moved: **Mt 26:13; 1 Tim 3:15; 1 Jn 4:7-5:3**. The aroma of spikenard in the kingdom will remind us of her love: **Song 4:12-13**. Judas however despised it and reacted against it: **Song 8:7; Lk 22:21,30**. These events triggered Judas to betray Jesus. The **Mt 26:6-13** record is in parenthesis to **explain his betrayal: "from that time Judas sought to betray him" Mt 26:14-16**. This sets the scene for the last supper in **John 13**. Jesus would have smelt this fragrance right until his final moments on the cross.

## JOHN 13:1 - 16:33 UPPER ROOM AND FAREWELL SPEECH

The last supper is also recorded in **Mt 26:20-30**. From here Jesus and the disciples prepare to leave the upper room. In **between Mt 26:30 and 31** is Jesus' final speech to his disciples, recorded in **Jn 13:31 - 16:33**. Also in this section is his prayer of **Jn 17:1-26**. The first part of Jesus' farewell speech (**Jn 13:31-14:31**) is given in the upper room. The second part (**Jn 15:1-Jn 16:33**) is spoken as they go down to the garden. In **John 17** Jesus prays for his disciples.

## JOHN 17:1-5 PRAYER FOR THE COMPLETION OF HIS WORK

Prayer for himself was crucial for the salvation of his brethren.

1. The prayer was given after they left the upper room: **Jn 14:31**. Also before Gethsemane: **18:1**. Most likely out in the open: **17:1**.
2. Deliberately spoken in the hearing of the disciples **17:13**.
3. His future victory is regarded as accomplished **17:4,7-8,11-12**. He speaks in his prayer as if it is already finished: **16:33**.
4. His prayer incorporates us who have believed: **17:20; 20:30-31**.
5. Jesus *manifested and declared* God's Name, making *oneness* with his Father possible: **Jn 5:19-20; 17:6,26**. Jesus prays for our salvation. This brings great responsibility upon us and our ecclesias.

**v1 Lifted up his eyes to heaven: Psalms 123:1-2**. Contrast to **Lk 18:13**. **Father:** Not "my father" as in **10:29-30**. His prayer is to God as the Father of the whole family: **17:21, Eph 3:14-16, Jn 20:17**. **Hour is come:** Time of suffering and glorification: **12:23, 27**. He looks beyond: **Lk 9:51; Heb 12:2**. His focus is on being received up. **Glorify thy son:** God had already answered him: **12:28**. He had already glorified God: **17:4**. His victory would glorify Him again: **Isa 45:23-25; Phil 2:9-11**. **v2 Given him power: Authority: Jn 13:3**. **Over all flesh:** Allusion to **Gen 1:26-28**. Adam given *dominion (to tread, i.e. under his feet): Psalms 8:4-8, Heb 2:6-8. **As many as thou has given:** His Father calls and he rejects none of his Father's choice: **Jn 6:37,44**. "Many called... few chosen" **Matt 20:16**.*

**v3 Life eternal:** Divine nature: **2 Pet 1:2-4; 1 Jn 5:11,13,20; Jude 21**. Contrast to the world's riches: **1 Tim 6:17-19**. Precious pearl of great price: **Mt 13:46**. Treasures of the kingdom: **Psalms 72; Isa 32:14-18; 35:1-10; 41:18-20; 65:17-25; Mic 4:1-5; Rev 21:1-7; 22:1-5**.

**Know: Phil 3:10**. Gk. *know thoroughly, completely, in a way we are influenced by that knowledge*. Scripturally used for the relationship between husband and wife. **Key Scriptures: Jer 9:23-24; 22:11-16 Only true God:** The first commandment: **Ex 20:3** cp **Jn 5:44**. Only one way to salvation: **Rom 3:29-31**. The deeper we appreciate God's ways, the more deeply we will love Him **Jesus Christ:** The pathway to knowing God: **Jn 17:14-21, 25-26; Acts 2:36**. **Whom thou has sent:** Seven times in this prayer: **17:2,8,8,21,23,25**. cp. **1 Jn 5:20**.

**v4 I have glorified thee on the earth:** His perfection was a work of God: **1 Cor 1:29-31**. **I have finished the work:** Same word as "perfect" in **17:23**. cp. **4:34**. His mind was on the end, even though the cross lay ahead: **19:30** He was acutely aware of his responsibility **v5 With thine own self:** cp. **13:32** He had a God-like disposition. More than eternal life: **2 Peter 1:4**. **Before the world was:** The age. He was foreordained. He was in God's mind from the beginning, the centre of God's purpose: **Jn 1:1,14; 1 Pet 1:2,20; Rev 13:8**. This glory will give to his disciples **17:22**.

## 17:6-19 PETITION FOR HIS APOSTLES

**v6 Manifested thy name:** Gk. *phaneroo, to make plain*. In him they saw the Father: **Jn 14:9, 1 Tim 3:16; 2 Tim 1:10**. **Thine they were:** Repetition: **17:9,11,12,19**. He was acutely aware of his responsibility to God's family, called through His word: **Jn 1:4-5; Acts 15:14**. Imagine having that responsibility! **They have kept thy word:** "Thy word" is synonymous with His "Name". The Word is the way God's Name is appreciated. Note the Apostles' use of *The Name* of God and Jesus Christ from **Ex 3:14-15** in **Acts 3:13, 16; 4:7,10,12,17,18,30**. **v7 Now they have known:** Living what he taught: **Jn 7:16-17**. No better way to learn, but to actually do it. God's ways are not a set of rules but a revelation of principles: **Psalms 103:7**. **v8 They received them:** Many heard his "speech" but could not receive his "word" ("*logos*" - inner reasoning): **Jn 8:43**. **I came out from thee: Jn 16:29-31; 1 Jn 5:10-11**. **v9 I pray not for the world:** This particular prayer was not for the world, yet he did exhort believers to pray for them, as he did: **Mt 5:44; Lk 23:34**.

**v10 Thine are mine:** He has a close feeling of fellowship here. What a brotherhood it would be if we could think like that. **I am glorified in them:** Believers who are *in Christ* receive the victory: **Lk 12:32; Rom 8:18-19; Col 3:1-4; 1 Pet 4:13; Rev 1:5-6**. **v11 No more in world:** Especially between death and resurrection: **Jn 16:16**. **Holy Father:** Disciples must be *separate* from the world: **2 Cor 6:17-18; 7:1; 1 Pet 1:15-16**. **Keep through thine own name: Psalms 79:9, Prov 18:10**. We are baptised into the Name of the Father, **Mt 28:19**. **Psalms 79:9-10; Prov 18:10** **They may be one:** Repetition: **17:21,22,23**. **God's ultimate purpose: Zech 14:9** "His Name One." **Key Principle: Gen 2:24** cited in **Eph 5:31** re: Christ and his Spiritual bride who are **one**, cp. **2 Cor 11:2**. See *Jesus Christ's Vision of the Kingdom*. **v12 I have kept... none is lost:** Gk. "kept watch," over the flock, for the time when he is absent: **Psalms 95:7; Mic 5:2; Zech 13:7; Jn 10:27-30**. Event of **Jn 18:9** is a partial fulfillment of those words. **Son of perdition:** i.e. *born for destruction*. Judas' betrayal was prophesied, but it was his choice: **Isa 57:3-4**. Title of the Pope: **2 Thess 2:3**. **Scripture fulfilled: Psalms 41:9; 109:8,16,18, Acts 1:20**, of which he was aware: **13:18**.



**v13 I speak in the world:** Spoken in their hearing to encourage them. **My joy fulfilled: 1 Jn 1:4**. **v14 I have given them thy word:** Preaching God's Word results in persecution and *enmity*: **Gen 3:15, Mt 10:34; Acts 5:41**. **World hated them: Jn 15:18, 1 Jn 2:15-17; 3:1,13**. **v15 Keep them from the evil:** To protect them spiritually through fiery trials: **1 Pet 4:12-13, 1 Jn 3:12-13**.

**v16 Not of the world:** Constant theme in John's epistles: **1 Jn 2:15-17; 3:1; 4:5** cp. **Jn 18:36**. **v17 Sanctify them:** To be *made holy*, as in **Rev 22:11**. **Thy word:** God's word is powerful to change us and ultimately save us: **Jn 15:3; Eph 5:26**. **v18 Sent into the world:** They have a work to do: **Jn 10:36; Mk 16:15**. **v19 For their sakes:** We are saved by his life: **Rom 5:10**. His perfect and resurrected life is ours: **Col 3:3-4**. **Sanctified through the truth:** Paul paraphrases this in **Heb 2:11**: "...are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

## 17:20-26 PRAYER FOR ALL BELIEVERS

**v20 Through their word:** Firstly by their teaching: **Rom 10:14, 2 Cor 5:19-20**. To us by their writings: **Jn 20:30-31, 1 Pet 1:11-12; Heb 1:1-2**. **Rom 10:15** "How beautiful are the feet of them that bring good tidings." (citing **Isa 52:7**). The most powerful method of preaching is personal conviction and example. **v21 All may be one: Key Scripture: Psalms 133:1-3**. Mt Hermon is a symbol of the *High Priest* united with his brethren (also **Song 4:8**). **One in us:** Believers justified by the one God: **Rom 3:29, Gal 3:20**. **World may believe:** Ecclesial unity comes by submitting to one another, putting aside personal desires for the larger whole: **Phil 2:3**.

**v22 I have given them:** This *glory* consists of bestowal of divine nature: **17:1,5; Rom 5:1-2; 8:17**. **Even as we are one: Jn 10:28-36**. **v23 Perfect in one:** Perfected forever: **Heb 10:14**. Complete love: **1 Jn 2:5, 4:12, 17-18**. **v23 Perfect in one: 1 Cor 8:6**. Love is a mutual thing: **Jn 16:27**. **v24 Father I will:** Same attitude as his Father: **Lk 12:32**. **That where I am:** We shall be gathered to him: **14:3**. **Behold my glory:** We will see the King in his beauty: **Isa 33:17**. **Before foundation of the world:** At which time God was already preparing a Kingdom for His children. **Mt 25:34**. **v25 Righteous Father:** Justified by God's righteousness: **Rom 3:24-26**. **These have known:** Knowing Christ crucial: **17:3; Isa 53:11**.

**v26 Declared thy name:** Memorial of His character and purpose. The whole world will come to know this: **Isa 52:5-6; Jer 16:19-21**. **Love wherewith thou lovest me:** The depth of God's love for His son is a model for our love of him: **1 Jn 5:1**. **I in them:** Beautiful way to end the prayer: **Col 1:18-19**.

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