

Jesus' Prayer For His People

"I am not asking You to take them out of the world,
but to keep them away from the evil one...

Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth...

Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am,
so that they may see My glory which You have given Me,
for You loved Me before the foundation of the world."

John 17:15, 17, 24 (NASB)

I love to pray alone and with others. Prayer is such a natural exercise for believers. Prayer is the breath of heaven. Nothing can compare to the wonder, the glory of presenting ourselves to our Father in heaven by singing, quoting to Him promises from Scripture, telling Him of our love for Him, glorying in His remarkable attributes, marvelling at the wonders of His universe, and on it goes. There is no end of aspects to topics to explore in the school of prayer.

I believe that the most wonderful spiritual lesson for us in prayer is to reflect on our beloved Good Shepherd's prayer for His sheep. This is His heart opened for us to see and to draw us nearer to Him as we delight in His petitions, His positive descriptions of us, and how He does not refer to our all too often failures.

Do your prayers for yourself reflect the prayer of your Lord for you? Are you burdened for the unity of the Lord's people? He refers to this matter 4 times (vss. 11, 21, 22, 23). When was the last time you felt burdened for unity among the Lord's people? Does your heart delight to ponder how

wonderfully your beloved Good Shepherd desires you to be with Him (v. 24). Can you wait to see His glory considering how much He wishes to display it to you (v. 24)? Are these matters as important to you as they are to Him?

Books could be written on this prayer of our beloved Redeemer's loving petitions for us His chosen ones (v.6). How grateful we should be that we have this glimpse into the heart of our loving high priest!

Arise, my soul, arise;
shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding Sacrifice
in my behalf appears:
Before the throne
my surety stands,
Before the throne
my surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above,
for me to intercede;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood to plead:
His blood atoned for all our race,
His blood atoned for all our race,

And sprinkles now
the throne of grace.
Five bleeding wounds He bears,

received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers;
they strongly plead for me:
"Forgive him, oh, forgive,"
they cry,
"Forgive him, oh, forgive,"
they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed
sinner die!"

The Father hears Him pray,
His dear anointed One;
He cannot turn away
the presence of His Son;
His Spirit answers to the blood,
His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled;
His pard'ning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child;
I can no longer fear:
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father cry

-Charles Wesley

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