



Jesus Prays

Lesson Overview

1. What Does Prayer Do

Watch the opening of a video at bit.ly/WhatDoesPrayerDo to encourage thought about prayer. Discuss.

2. Watch a Video

Watch John 17 at bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn from **2hr 14min 33sec to 2hr 18min 52sec** (4min 19sec).

3. Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

New Church Concept Christian Life

A person is truly a Christian when that person lives as a Christian, that is, as the Lord teaches. *Arcana Coelestia* 1799.4

In the early days of Christianity it was acknowledged throughout the Christian world that the Lord Jesus Christ is God.... Later they invented the fiction of a Son of God from eternity, who descended and assumed a humanity. They did not know that God Himself, the Creator of the Universe, descended in order to become the Redeemer, and thus the Creator anew according to the plain declarations in the Old Testament. *True Christian Religion* 637

FaithBuilder 3 | Lesson 28 | Gospel of John

What Does Prayer Do? Watch a Video

Watch the opening of *What Does Prayer Do? Swedenborg and Life*. **Start at the beginning. End at 1min 17sec;** 1min 17sec. (See link on left.) If a friend asked you the questions Curtis asked, what would you say?

1. What happens if we talk to God?
2. Will God listen and answer?
3. Can prayer change God's plan?
4. What is prayer, and what does it really do?

As Jesus finished His farewell speech to the disciples, He prayed. His prayer parallels the duties of the High Priest among the Jewish people for the Day of Atonement. Jesus washed the disciples feet (as the High Priest would wash himself), offered a prayer to God, asked for a blessing on Himself, His disciples, and all believers. In doing this He was showing Himself to be a high priest as He prepared for His ultimate sacrifice.

Watch a Video

Watch Jesus Prays, John 17:1-26, from *The Life of Jesus . English . Official Full HD Movie*, at bit.ly/GCEDGospelOfJohn. (Enter link in the web browser bar at the top of your screen.) **Start the video at 2hr 14min 33sec. End at 2hr 18min 52sec;** 4min 19sec. After the Last Supper Jesus gave a three-part farewell speech. The first part was a message of comfort and consolation; the second part was a call to commit to Him; the third part (today's video) is prayer for a blessing on Himself, His disciples and His believers. Throughout the prayer flashbacks from Jesus' life appear. You might want to pause occasionally and identify the events.

Note: You may find it helpful to have Bibles open to **John 17** for the discussion.

Discuss

Choose questions for discussion.

1. Jesus gave glory to the Father. What does it mean "to glorify" someone? What are some of the ways can we "glorify" God?
2. How did Jesus grant eternal life to all people through His life in the world? Through His sacrifice on the cross? Or through a lifetime of fighting the hells through temptations, the last of which was death on the cross?
3. How can knowing the Lord grant eternal life?
4. Why might Jesus have chosen an "inner circle," His disciples, during His life. What are the potential benefits from this?

5. Do you have an “inner circle” of friends? What support do good friends offer that others do not?
6. What might the disciples have known about Jesus that others did not know? How might they have supported Him? Did the Lord need support?
7. Does the Lord love some people more than others?
8. What actions can we take to become friends with the Lord? What might hold us back from being a friend to the Lord? Does the Lord have an “inner circle” of friends on earth today? If so, who are they?
9. If Jesus’ life is a model for our lives, what does His prayer tell us about praying for others? In what ways might praying for others help them or help us?
10. Discuss the idea that we “belong to” the Lord.
11. How can we make the Lord’s name manifest in our lives?
12. Imagine you were one of the twelve disciples. How might you have felt when the Lord prayed that you be kept “safe in His name.” What is it to be safe in His name? How does the Lord keep us safe?
13. What is Jesus referring to when He talks about “the world.” How does the Lord send us “into the world?”
14. Jesus prayed for “all (believers) to be one.” In what ways are we to be one with Christians?
15. Are New Church believers Christians? In what ways are New Church teachings the same as Christian teachings, and in what ways are they different?
16. Christians refer to believers as being in the *body of Christ*. What do you think of this idea? Compare the of Body of Christ with the Grand Man of heaven.
17. How can a person see the Lord’s glory? Can non-believers see the Lord’s glory?
18. How can the Lord be *in us*, and we *in Him*?

Jesus’ Final Prayer

FOR TEACHER REFERENCE

Jesus’ closing prayer is in three parts: a prayer that He be united with the Father; a prayer that His disciples be united with Him; and a prayer that all believers might be unified.

Jesus begins by lifting up His eyes to heaven and saying, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may also glorify You” (17:1). Jesus is no longer addressing His disciples. Although He is still with them, He simply turns His attention heavenward and lifts His prayers to God. It is the end of the farewell address, which began just after the Passover meal and the foot washing ceremony (John 14:1). In Matthew (26:36-46), Mark (14:32-42), and Luke (22:39-46), the prayer after the Passover meal is in the Garden of Gethsemane. In each of those accounts, Jesus is in great agony. But in John, He does not appear to be in any kind of agony at all. Instead, we are given a glimpse of Jesus’ inner world just before the crucifixion. For the moment, He has “overcome the world.” His prayer arises from a place of inmost peace.

In the third and final section of the closing prayer...Jesus prays for all people. It is a prayer for oneness and unity.... The very essence of God’s love, then, is a continual, unceasing, perpetual effort to be one with His people. This striving for oneness never ceases, throughout all eternity, no matter how often, or in how many ways we reject or pervert that love.

From *The Gospel of John* by Rev. Dr. Ray Silverman, unpublished manuscript.

New Church Concept God’s Love

The essence of love is to love others outside of one self, to desire to be one with them, and to render them blessed from oneself.... The first essential, which is to love others outside of one's self, is recognized in God’s love for the whole human race.... The love of God goes forth and extends not only to good people and good things, but also to evil people and evil things.... The second essential of the love of God, which is a desire to be one with others, is recognized in His conjunction with the angelic heaven, with the church on earth, with everyone there, and with every thing good and true that enters into and constitutes humankind and the church. Moreover, love viewed in itself is nothing but an endeavor towards conjunction; therefore that this aim of the essence of love might be realized man was created by God into His own image and likeness, with which a conjunction is possible. That the Divine love continually seeks conjunction is evident from the Lord's own words: That He wishes them to be one, He in them and they in Him, and that the love of God might be in them (John 17:21-23, 26). The third essential of the love of God, which is to render others blessed from Himself is recognized in eternal life, which is the endless blessedness, happiness, and felicity that God gives to those who receive into themselves His love. *True Christian Religion* 43