

In the Shadow of the Cross - Jesus Prays for His First Followers

by J. Glyn Owen

Jesus prays for his followers, asking God to keep them safe from the evil one and to protect them from Satan's attacks.

Duration: 51:39

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 8:44, John 17:15, Ephesians 6:12, James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 5:18

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of hiding in God as a way to protect oneself from the devil. He references Martin Luther's hymn 'A Mighty Fortress is Our God' to illustrate this concept. The preacher also highlights the power of Christ in overcoming the world and encourages listeners to put their trust in Him. The sermon is based on John chapter 17, where Jesus prays for himself and for the future church.

Transcript

It's a joy to welcome you all tonight, and particularly those who are joining us as a congregation as we meditate in these evening services on the very remarkable chapter, gigantic chapter, John chapter 17. Really, it had been our original intention simply to preach three or four sermons from this chapter concluding two weeks ago. We had been meditating upon this passage in our midweek service a few years ago, and we were thinking that we would have concluded our pre-Easter studies in good time, but one and another has prevailed upon me to continue here for a little while, and I do feel that I must confess that perhaps the providence of God is behind this.

And so we continue with the section that we have begun to study laterally, beginning with verse 6 and concluding with verse 19. The chapter as a whole, you will remember, divides quite naturally into three. In the first six verses our Lord prays for himself.

Beginning with verse 20, he prays for his church of the future right on to the very end of the age. And it would seem that in verses 6 to 19, he is praying for those who were at that particular time around him, his own, his first followers, his first disciples. Now we have been looking at some of the main truths that are woven into those verses already.

We have seen, first of all, how our Lord presented the credentials of those for whom he was about to pray. He is the great high priest here, and he is coming as a representative of his followers to bear them before God and to intercede for them. And everything is done properly here.

There is nothing slipshod about our Lord's prayer. It seems to be impeccably perfect. It seems to have been thought through from beginning to end, and he knows exactly what he means to do next.

It is so orderly, so painstakingly so, that it really takes your breath away. First of all, he began then with verse 6 to present their credentials. That is, to assure the Father that he was praying for those he had every right to represent before his throne.

They were those to whom he administered the word that the Father had given him, and the words that the Father had given him, and they had believed his message, and so forth. And so he had a right to represent them, had not the Father put them in his own charge? Had not the Father called them out of the world and given them to the Son? He represents them before the throne. Then we move on and we see that having stressed the propriety of his representing them before the Father, he professed his very special interest in them, in verses 9 and 10.

Then we began looking at the high priest's postulation of the problems that he foresaw his followers having to face. Jesus stood looking down the corridors of time and thinking of this little handful of his followers moving out into a world, the world that would crucify him tomorrow, the day after this prayer was uttered. And he thought of the way in which they would have to live in that world and face the enemies that had faced him.

And then going beyond that, he could see everything that was ahead. And so he brings before them, before the Father in heaven, their needs as foreseen by him. And he matches every exigency and every problem that he foresees with his own high priestly intercession.

Now tonight we take up the thread with verse 15. We do not take these verses in order because some thoughts are expressed once, twice, even three times. And so we have taken them together.

With verse 15, our Lord foresees certain needs of his followers due to their inevitable encounter with the aggressively hostile foe of God and man. Let me read, and I'm reading now from the Revised Standard Version. I do not pray that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one.

That thou shouldest keep them from the evil one. Now it had been my intention this evening to gloss over this and to come to the three main petitions that are found in this particular passage. But if I tell you that I've not been home for very long since the morning worship, and the bulk of my time this afternoon has been taken up with trying to counsel people who are involved with Satanists and Satan, you will understand why I feel that the Lord is bringing us to this particular passage in this evening hour.

I do not pray, says our Lord, that thou shouldest take them out of the world. They're needed in the world. But in the world, they're going to face a malign foe of the most brutal order.

And I'm praying for them. And opposite the intransigence and the malign purposes of the evil one, I place my intercessions for them. And I would like to bring this as a very message from the Lord to anyone here tonight who is aware of the power and subtlety of the enemy, and who is having to grapple with principalities and powers, perhaps in some unusual way.

I trust that as we meditate upon this together, you will sense something of the wonder of our Lord's intercession, that he's foreseen and foreknown your problem, and he's prayed for it. And because he's prayed for it, you can take comfort, and you can take courage, and you can go back into the difficult situation, and you can face all that Satan can hurl at you. Jesus who died is risen again, and the risen Lord is glorified, and under his feet are principalities and powers, Satan and all his hosts.

And you may stand in the evil day, child of God. And having done all, not without doing anything, but having done all, you by the grace of the risen Lord may stand. May the Spirit of God enable us to get the inner message, then, of these remarkable words of our Lord in his intercession.

Now, the actual language of the text may be interpreted, of course, as referring to evil as a principle, or to the evil one. I say that in case there are some people here who are accustomed to interpreting this as a reference simply to evil as a principle. We take our key from the general context, and I think that in the light of the general context here, it is best to follow the translations that refer to Satan here, to the evil one, rather than to evil as a principle.

Now, let me explain what I mean. If you look back over the chapters preceding, you will see that our Lord has had much more to say about Satan than we generally acknowledge or generally realize. He spoke earlier on of the prince of this world being cast out, in chapter 12 and verse 31, of his entering into Judas Iscariot, 13 and 27, of his emergence in some climactic sense.

The prince of this world is coming, says Jesus, and he's coming in some climactic sense. And then he adds this, but he has nothing in me. He has no power over me.

He has no authority over me, says Jesus, in chapter 14 and verse 30. I'll go back still a little bit further. Earlier in chapter 10, Jesus had warned of Satan's activity as a wolf, threatening the sheep of his fold, even attempting to steal the good shepherd's lambs or sheep out of his very hand.

In the light of all this, it is best to see the reference now before us in John 17, 15, as pointing directly to Satan. Jesus taught his disciples to pray that they might be delivered from him, in Matthew 6, 13. And deliver us from evil, says the old translation.

No, it's hope on the evil one. He taught us to pray for that. Now he himself prays for us that we should be delivered from the evil one.

He supports the prayers of his people with his own intercessions. Oh, let's take our stand here. Jesus brings his intercessions, and he wraps our little prayers up in his, and he says, Father, I pray for them in this respect.

Now the doctrine of a personal devil or Satan is not very popular in our sophisticated world. Though the antagonism to the biblical teaching has been considerably weakened in recent years, since World War II, I suppose, and by some of the barbaric things that have been happening in various parts of the world in recent times. Moreover, whatever the value of some of the films that have been abroad in recent days, such a film as *The Exorcist* has at least helped create a climate in which the concept of a malign spiritual power can be seriously considered.

And it is becoming more and more generally acknowledged that evil as a principle or as an influence simply cannot exist in a vacuum. Where there is temptation, there is a tempter. Behind evil there lurks the evil one.

But now I don't want to attempt to address myself to this philosophically. It's Jesus is praying here. And Jesus knew Satan.

And this is the way I want to come to it. The one who is praying knew the enemy. Now you may not know Satan as well as he did.

You and I are not such a nuisance to his kingdom as our Lord was. And so we may not have known anything of the ferocity and the barb and the bitterness of his approaches to us. It may be that some of us don't threaten his kingdom to any real, to a point of being of any danger to him, and so he doesn't take any notice of us.

We don't really know much about Satan. But here we are dealing with a Son of God in prayer. He knew Satan.

He knew him. Not only did he know him as the eternal Son of God knows everything, but he had known him in experience. As Son of God, he knew Satan's dark, sinister schemes whilst he had in the flesh personally encountered him in his incarnate life, seeking in one way or another to frustrate the outworking of God's redemptive purposes.

It may not be out of place for us to recall some of these incidents, just for us to see that the one who is interceding here, our great high priest, knew what he was praying for, even if you don't and if I don't. He did. The imponderably enthralling experience of our Lord at his baptism was hardly over.

When you remember, Jesus was driven by the Holy Spirit into the desert, into the wilderness, to be tempted of Satan. He had come, you see, to make war with Satan. And this was part of the whole business of his incarnation.

It was to tear the mask away from Satan and to conquer him. And so you shouldn't be surprised when you read that the Spirit takes him into the arena of the battle, into the desert. And it begins there.

Jesus was there subjected to a sustained series of temptations. I don't mean to go into them in detail tonight. Temptations of the most subtle order, that had he fallen, had he fallen prey to Satan's seductions, they would have completely undermined the whole of his redemptive work.

With these sinister attacks successfully repulsed, we read that Jesus returned from the wilderness in the power of the same Holy Spirit and that Satan left him for a season, for a season. However long or short such a season may have been, Scripture affirms that taking the whole of his earthly life into consideration, he was tempted in all points like as we are. He was dealing with Satan himself.

Now the remaining history of our Lord's dealings with the devil is not recorded in detail or in its entirety, but we have sufficient evidence before us to recognize some features of the ongoing battle. Significantly, the evidence before us points very largely to Satan's indirect attacks upon our Lord. A most subtle kind of attack, not directly, not showing his hand, not coming out into the open, but indirectly.

He tempted Jesus in and through the carnal counsels of a friend, a disciple, Simon Peter. And at a very subtle point, he just tried to dissuade our Lord when Peter had recently confessed him as the Son of God, the Messiah, Son of the living God. Peter said, now look, he says, you mustn't talk about dying.

Do you remember how Jesus turned to him and says, get behind me, Satan. You don't, you don't have any sense of the things of God, but the things of men. A moment ago you were in touch with the heavenly realities, but now you're not in touch with them at all.

You're out of touch. Get behind me, Satan. We are also probably justified in seeing Satan's sinister purpose in daily facing the Savior in and through the constant presence with him of Judas Iscariot.

I often wondered what Jesus thought when he looked into the eyes of Judas Iscariot and knew that he was Satan's agent among the 12. Long ago, he told them, have not I chosen you 12 and one of you is a devil. Oh yes, a long time ago.

The Lord knew full well that Satan was going to influence Judas more and more until at last he would be able to move into his heart, into his spirit, lock, stock and barrel and make his home there. Jesus knew that. Then there were times when Satan jeered at him through the attitudes and actions of his avowed foes.

To take one illustration, I have no time to go through this in any detail tonight. There was one occasion when listening to Satan's agents, the scribes and the Pharisees, Jesus turns to them and says, look men, he says, you are of your father, the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and he has nothing to do with the truth.

He sees them already following in the murderous footsteps of their father, Satan. For he sees already the emergence of the evil strategy whereby they would king, kill him and slay him, the incarnate son without a cause. Now against that background, the background of such experience armed with peculiar foresight and foreknowledge, Jesus realized the kind of thing that would happen to his followers as he withdrew and ascended to be with the father.

He knew what awaited them. He knew exactly what was on their route. And yet he prayed, I do not pray that thou shalt take them out of the world.

Oh, our Lord's confidence in his own prayers. They were not strong and Jesus knew it. He's only just told them there are many things that I have to tell you, but I can't tell you them now.

But when the spirit comes, he will lead you into all truth. I can't tell you, you can't take what I have to tell you. They were so immature.

Their capacity to receive the truth was negligible even at the end of three years. And yet, my dear friends, Jesus believed that by his intercessions, by his prayers, these weaklings could be kept from disaster and made strong in his grace to carry his gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. And they did.

I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They were needed in the world week, though they were so that he does not pray for their exodus from the society of men. But as it were, he takes them into his arms and he says, father, here they are.

I'm not asking you to take them away, but I'm asking you to keep them from the evil one. Now, if it be asked what precisely Jesus did foresee, dare I suggest a few things. And I'm doing so simply to fill in things that you may not be thinking of at this moment, but which are very important for us to have just a faint notion of our Lord's mighty ministry of intercession.

It seems to me that he saw at a glance the entire satanic program with its strategy and its principles or absence of principles right down as far as the end of time. I am prepared to believe that what the book of acts and the epistles record as ultimately taking place during the new testament period was there like an open book before our Lord. And he saw it all.

He foresaw it. He foreknew it. And he prayed specifically for certain things.

I think Jesus was aware at this point in time of the emergence of Satan as the roaring lion to whom Peter refers. Threatening to devour his prey through a totalitarian state in the first place. And some years later through a totalitarian church.

I believe that Jesus foresaw him as the slithering serpent who would seduce the unwary, hiding his poisonous fangs beneath the bewitching exterior. I believe that Jesus foresaw him as the angel of light, professing knowledge and holiness, but actually the enemy of both. Looking down the corridors of time, our Lord foresaw what Satan would attempt and how he saw it all.

He saw how he would seduce the saints to sin. Or if not positively to violate known commandments, then to do the right thing in the wrong way as Ananias and Sapphira did. Of course, they aimed at the right thing, but they were lying about it.

They were cheating, but they meant to do well. Jesus foresaw that. He saw how Satan would erect his very own synagogue to quote the book of Revelation where the church is.

I'm sorry, I would like to comment on that, but I dare not. Jesus foresaw Satan's capacity to hinder the gospel preacher. Read Paul in Thessalonians.

Satan has hindered me, says the apostle to the Gentiles, to steal the seed of the word from the soil of the human heart before it is germinated. And on the other hand, to sow his own nefarious tears in the soil of human society. Jesus saw it all.

Here then, as Jesus knew, is no sleeping sluggard, but an ever active foe driven by hatred of God. His seal is unabating and his labor is unremitting. And what did Jesus do? What's his answer to this? He prayed for them.

Did he love them? You remember that word we considered a long time ago, now having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end. He loved them to the point of death. He loved them in order to die for them.

And he would love them beyond his death and his resurrection to the very end of their lives and the end of the age and the end of time into eternity to the very end. He loved them all right. So we may take it for granted that he did the best he could for them.

And what was the best he could do? He's the eternal son of God. All things were made by him and for him. And he upholds all things by the words of his power.

And what's the most you can do? What's the best you can do? This, my friend, intercede, intercede on the basis of his passion, passion. In the light of his person, the most significant thing that the son of God could do for them was pray the father to keep them. And he deemed that to be adequate in the light of that.

And on the basis of that, he faced what was before him on Golgotha the following day, despising the shame for the joy that was set before him. He endured the cross, despised its shape. Now, let me bring you to the first of the specific requests that he makes.

And I'm not going to deal with it in any detail tonight, but we shall move on from here. Next time it is this notion of safety. He prays for their safety and you have it.

First of all, in verse 11, the second half of verse 11, as well as in verse 15. And I want to put these two halves of the one request alongside of one another. Now listen to this two fold request, which really makes one particular desire or plea.

Verse 11, holy father, keep them in thy name, which thou hast given me. Now, have you got that? The first part of the plea is this, holy father, keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me, keep them in the name. In verse 17, the one we've already been looking at without really dealing with.

I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. Notice the order, verse 11, keep them in thy name. Verse 17, keep them from the evil one.

Mark the positive and the negative features enshrined within that one comprehensive plea for their keeping, keeping in the name, keeping from the evil one. It bears repeating that with his full knowledge of all that lay before his people, of the strength of their enemy and of the fact that his own glory was bound up with their welfare. The most important thing which Jesus felt he could do on their behalf was to pray for them.

He did not consider giving them any advice in military warfare, the weapons of our warfare are not. Neither indeed did he give them any lessons in the art of mastering polemics. In the father's keeping, they needed neither armaments nor arguments.

It was enough if they were in the father's sovereign keeping and care. That's the one thing Jesus required and if they're there, his glory and their safety are in good keeping. He would not fail them.

Had Jesus any doubts as to the sufficiency of this simple faith in the father, then his very affection and responsibility for his people would have required him to make alternative arrangements. It needs to be noted also that Jesus deemed it to be enough for his disciples peace as well as their safety. Simply to know that he thus prayed for them.

Now I think that is implicit in the fact that our Lord allowed them apparently to overhear this prayer and even to see him in the exercise of this prayer. We read in the very first verse that John records that he lifted up his eyes into heaven, which means that they saw his attitude of body. They saw his physical stance.

But then we read in verse 13. These things, says Jesus, I speak in the world. He's talking about his prayer.

These things I am saying or these things I am asking or speaking in the world. What for? That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. It's really unbelievable the grace of our Lord Jesus.

Here he is on the eve before the cross and he knew what was happening. It was nothing strange to him. He knew what tomorrow meant.

He knew what tomorrow was going to bring. And he's concerned about their joy. Hallelujah.

Isn't it wonderful? Our Lord facing the bitterest anguish and agony of his own cross is concerned for the joy of rebels like Peter and a bunch of men that were all going to run away from him. And he's concerned about their joy. These things I'm speaking in the world.

He says I want them to hear me praying to you father. And I want them to overhear what I'm asking because I want them to have joy. Where from? Basically from this.

From knowing that Jesus was placing them into the same hands as he was placing himself. And that he was entrusting his disciples, his sheep, his followers into the care and the keeping of the same God as he was trusting himself as he went to the cross and would be buried in the tomb. He had spoken of his resurrection.

He had spoken of his being glorified. You see he expected victory. He knew it was coming.

He was sure of it. And so he spoke of the cross in terms of his glorification. The hour is coming he says for the son of man to be glorified.

Oh listen to this. Now is the son of man glorified and in him God is glorified. If God is glorified in him God will also glorify him in himself.

Jesus had committed himself to the father and because of that he saw his very cross. He saw his very anguish as a matter of his glorification. You see everything is safe that you put into the father's care.

That's what Jesus is saying. And he has prayed in the hearing of his disciples that they may sense the marvel and the wonder and the adequacy of being in the father's prayer and in the father's care at the son's behest. Then when we shall come ultimately to the end of this high priestly prayer in verse 24 he will make this other plea which seems to crown everything.

Father he says I will not I want I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me. Can you see the optimism of our Lord? Can you see the certainty of victory? You can understand now what he meant a little earlier on when he said be of good courage. I've overcome the world.

And he says I want these people to be where I am to behold my glory. Father he says I will it. On the basis of my redemptive work I will it.

Not I will it. Having laid down my life having finished the work you gave me to do in the covenant betwixt us I will it. Now it is against that larger background that we are to understand the savior's plea for safety.

Keep them in thy name. Keep them from the evil one. Can I just say two things simply? This plea reflects the intimacy existing between the father and the son.

I only say this briefly but it is so very important and it has a very practical bearing. Not only has Jesus come from God and given them God's word in verse eight but he eternally shared in the glory of God. Yet another feature of that same intimacy emerges at this stage.

Namely that involved in the work of the son here upon earth. Jesus had not engaged in his work in isolation from the father you see. But rather in closest cooperation and fellowship with him.

The disciples gathered out of the world are the joint possession of the father and of the son. The father gave them to the son. They became the sons but Jesus says all mine are thine and thine are mine.

We have a common interest in them. They belong to us both the father and the son. The point is that the father and the son had worked in perfect harmony and fellowship in everything that Jesus had done.

In his birth of the virgin, in his growth and development as a boy, as a lad, on to maturity until he started his public ministry and right through in what he taught, in what he said, in what he did. The father and the son had been working in utter cooperation. Now notice the fruit of that cooperation has emerged in these disciples.

And Jesus doesn't need to plead that the father should take charge of them when Jesus is going to die. He says father I'm just asking you very simply keep them. Let me put it to you like this.

Blessed is that person here tonight who in the conduct of the life of the home or of a business affair or of a church who when he comes to have to leave this life has simply to say simply to the father, father I'm leaving now you take over. And who can say before the prayer is ending I'm expecting to see them and they and I are going to be together in the next world into in your presence. Our Lord Jesus you see had engaged in everything in fellowship with his father so that he can now absolutely trust the father to carry on when he's out of the way.

Could you do that? That's the importance of beginning a work in God and continuing it with God as long as God gives us days. And what we begin with God and continue with God that we can leave in his care. But that brings me to the other matter.

The plea for their safety reflects the totality of his care for them. Our Lord's petition for the disciples safety is all embracing all inclusive. In fact such other petitions as he proceeds to make are in in a very real sense.

But an elaboration or extension of this one in praying for their safety he prays for everything else. Now we have noticed already the repeated plea keep them in verses 11 and 15. Keep them keep them in your name keep them from the evil one.

The word to keep sometimes use of soldiers keeping watch over one or another just as the soldiers kept watch over the body of our Lord on the cross. It's the same word. At other times it is use of prison officers guarding their prisoners.

There is so much more involved in keeping disciples in God's name however and keeping them from the evil one than is involved in guarding prisoners. Though it may well be that these two notions correspond in the same two-fold peril. Prisoners need to be guarded from someone breaking into the prison and letting them free.

Prisoners need to be guarded lest they make themselves free somehow or other escape. So do the saints of God need to be kept lest someone burgle and and kind of tear us away from our Lord. So do we need to be kept from trying to do that ourselves in one way or another.

But our Lord's prayer goes well beyond that. Even though it clearly includes that we have previously noted how the name stands for the whole person. Now listen to this first part of the plea.

Father he says keep them in your name. What does it mean? What does it mean? The first thought is that of God as surrounding his people like a fence. Like the defenses of a castle.

The ramparts of a castle. God is round about me says one of our hymns. And can I be afraid? And that's a beautiful notion.

As the mountains are rounded about Jerusalem so the Lord is round and about his people. It's a beautiful picture but it's not the most important picture here. It is important.

I chose Martin Luther's great hymn tonight just because of that. Because surely it puts in the most graphic terms this notion of being able to hide in God. The devil is around.

He's walking about seeking whom he may devour. Where do I hide? Hide in God. Hide in God.

A mighty fortress is our God. A bulwark never failing. Our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.

For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate on earth is not his equal. Or listen to this more familiar.

Round each habitation hovering see the cloud and fire appear. For a glory and a covering showing that the Lord is near. Round each habitation hovering.

What is it? It's the presence of God. God around his people. God surrounding the redeemed.

God standing between men and women and the enemy. Blessed I say is the child of God that goes out into the fray that goes into the enemy's field and terrain and yet can see God standing between him and the enemy. That's your privilege child of God.

Taking this usage then the thought is of God in all his greatness and his glory and his grace as revealed in Jesus Christ standing between Christ's flock and their foe and standing there on active guard lest any harm should overtake them. You remember those lovely words Proverbs. The name of the Lord is a strong tower.

The righteous runneth into it and is safe. It's just another aspect the same truth as Psalm 23 put in a different way. The Lord is our shield and our defender.

But now there is something even deeper here and with this I must close. It involves not simply having God as a kind of impregnable hedge around me guarding me keeping the enemy at bay and his his wicked influences but it means having fellowship with him. To be kept in God's name suggests more than freedom from danger more than God literally standing between us and danger in order to shield us.

It also implies fellowship with God himself. You see we're here back with the language of John 15 where Jesus speaks of I in you and you in me and so forth. Paul puts it like this to the Colossian Christians.

He says your life is hid with Christ in God. You're in Christ and you're with Christ in God. That's not just hiding within the ramparts of a fortress.

No no no no. But it's more than that. It's in living vital heart beating fellowship with him.

It's in touch with him. It's sharing his life. It's receiving his thoughts.

It's near enough to feel the pulse of the almighty and the heartbeat of your God and your father. It's fellowship. The language implies the enjoyment of the fullness which is in God as he is revealed in our Lord Jesus Christ.

To be in the name is to be in him who is personally the source of every good and perfect gift. To be in him the knowledge of whom is life eternal. To be in God is to be at the source of life and all the necessities of living.

Now the only other thing one needs to notice we conclude is this that the positive request comes before the negative. And I think this is a matter of some psychological significance. Fundamentally we are to be kept from the evil one by being kept in the father.

How are we going to be kept from satan? There is only one way. First of all by being incorporated into the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. By our union with him and our union with the father in the son.

By being brought into fellowship with God in Christ. That is the basis of all our hope. But being in him we can be sure that the enemy will not touch us unless it is his will.

That is why one of England's greatest evangelists ever, the great Whitefield was able to say I am he says immortal until my work is done. What do you mean Whitefield? This not only that God was round and about him and he wasn't afraid as the ramparts of a castle around about those that dwell within, but he was in fellowship with God. He was in the fellowship of life with God.

The only safeguard from satan and sin then is found in fellowship with God. It is only from within that holy place that you and I can resist the devil and fight the good fight of faith. Against that background we can sing as we have blessed be the everlasting God the father of our Lord.

Be his abounding mercy praised his majesty adored. Did you get these words? Saints by the power of God are kept. Saints by the power of God are being kept till the salvation come.

We walk by faith as strangers here but Christ will call us home. Satan's on the way and he's roaring and he's mad and as the day gets shorter so you may expect more fury from him. And listen my friend be of good cheer says the son of God I've overcome the world.

You a child of God are you a Christian? Have you put your life and your soul into the keeping of this dear crucified risen reigning Lord of ours? Or are you out in the cold away from him and open to all the assaults of men and demons without a defense? I pity you. I pity you. Frail humanity sinks in the mire apart from the only savior of God's provision but here is a fortress secure as heaven itself.

Within the embrace of our great high priest within the interests of the Christ of the cross and of the resurrection in his prayers the objects of his care and intercessions for he puts you in the father's arms. If you're there you don't need to worry. Let him put you there and let him do it now.

Let us pray. Oh Lord our God and our father we do not know we do not know how really to respond to your word for the profundity of it and the significance and the relevance of it catches up with us and takes our breath away. But we marvel our father that a word such as this could have been penned nearly 2,000 years ago and we find it so relevant to the things that have happened here and elsewhere in this city today and yesterday and the day before.

And there are your children that are facing this harsh enemy of their souls and your enemy. Oh Lord we pray for them that they may be unable to see themselves in your impregnable arms. And being in your arms they're in your prayers.

And having a place in your prayers and intercessions you have put them into the care of the father along with yourself. Help each one of us tonight to see ourselves there by faith. And as Monday morning dawns if you give us another day's existence and pilgrimage in this earthly scene grant our father that we shall face its unfolding hours from within the sense of fellowship with you that satan can only enter with permission not without.

Oh spirit of God seal your truth upon our hearts and consciousness and may we hide it within. That we may not sin against you but glory in your grace and power we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26605.mp3>

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