

# The Three Prayers (Part 3)

by Ron Bailey

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*Jesus' prayer in John 17 shows his relationship with the Father and his request for the Father to glorify him, highlighting the importance of understanding God's ways and the testimony of Jesus.*

**Duration:** 45:27

**Scripture:** Proverbs 8:1-3, Proverbs 8:12-16, Proverbs 8:22-31, John 17:5, John 17:24, Revelation 19:10, Revelation 21:5

**Topics:** "Prayer Example"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by describing a scene of chickens and a rooster in a courtyard, which transitions to the sound of Frank Sinatra singing 'Strangers in the Night.' The speaker then moves on to discuss John chapter 17, specifically verse 5, which highlights the relationship between Jesus and God the Father. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus willingly gave up his close relationship with the Father so that humanity could be reconciled with God. The sermon concludes with a call to prayer and a reminder that God can make all things new.

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## Transcript

Good evening. I've been looking at the three prayers of Jesus which took place in this period of time that I call the hour. Di has been doing the conscience and shouting.

I can share it too, but I haven't got the Welsh oil so I can't quite do it like Di. I think there's some kind of tarot in it. This is John chapter 17.

Before I turn to this, let me tell you a story. It's not from the story of this chicken brought this to mind. Some years ago I was in Tanzania with Keith Greener and we had been spending the time with one of the local pastors.

They'd been very kind to us and we'd been doing a lot of preaching and someone gave us a chicken as a present. We weren't quite sure how we were going to put this on our income tax return so we decided we'd give it to the local pastor in his house. We were staying and we went to sleep that night.

It was a cockerel. This local pastor already had a number of hens some of which were apparently at point of lay which is an interesting time for a cockerel so I'm told. They put these animals together in the little courtyard which was where our bedroom was.

At about two o'clock I guess in the morning this cockerel started crowing. I can sleep to almost anything. I'm one of these people who don't really sleep.

I die until morning. We couldn't sleep to that. It just went on and on and on.

In the end, Keith and myself, we dragged ourselves to the window to look out into the courtyard to see what was happening. These poor little cockerels, these little chickens on point of lay were scurrying around the perimeter of this courtyard with this cockerel stalking behind them with its head up in the air crowing away, kind of showing that it really was the cock of the roost. Then one of those amazing kind of things that seems to happen.

Somebody somewhere turned on a radio and after the darkness of the African night we heard Old Blue Eyes singing. And he was singing, strangers in the night, exchanging glances, lovers at first sight. It only kept us up one night, we ate it.

There's always a solution. If you'll turn with me to John chapter 17, I want to look at verse 5 tonight and that will mean that we've looked at 5 verses in 3 of my sessions which, at that rate, we shall finish John chapter 17 about the 14th of June and then I still need to go on to the other 2 prayers. So we'll do it slightly different.

I'm going to read these first 5 verses. Let me just say again, in case there are any who are here tonight who haven't been with us before, I mentioned right at the very beginning that in John chapter 12 when certain Greeks came looking for the Lord Jesus, Jesus first passed this comment and he said, the hour has come. And yet 5 days later here in John chapter 17 he is still saying the hour has come.

And I was talking about a unit of time that isn't 60 minutes. It's a unit of time in which God was going to achieve something. He was going to achieve our salvation.

He would purchase us. He would pay the price during that period of time and this is a prayer that comes out of the midst of that hour and with a tremendous consciousness of his Father's will that will be accomplished. I'll just read these first 5 verses to you.

These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify thy Son that thy Son also may glorify thee. And I mentioned that that really is the only petition, it's the only request the Lord Jesus makes in this particular chapter for himself.

He amplifies it a little bit later on but this is his only request. He wants the Father to glorify the Son so that the Son can glorify the Father. Then verse 2, as thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal. And then we said this, I think yesterday it was, this is life eternal that in order that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. The prayers of the Lord Jesus are very wonderful things to look at and just to see the relationship that he had with his Father.

I do think a lot, I do ask lots of questions which is why Malcolm can say that you often get lots of explanations from me. Some things will remain mysteries forever. The mystery of God, the mystery of iniquity, Malcolm Ford, I mean lots of these things are beyond explanation.

But other things, other things we can kind of give our attention to and try to understand. And God wants us to understand. He really does.

He wants us to, well what does it say in Hebrews? By faith we understand that the ages were created by the word of God. Notice the order of that. By faith we understand.

It's not that we understand in order to come to belief. It's not that we have to have all the questions answered before we can put our trust in God. But when you put your trust in God, God will increasingly give you understanding.

He wants you to understand. That's why he gave you a mind. And as I've often said here before, it's my favourite kind of American bumper sticker.

If you haven't changed your mind recently, how do you know you've still got one? We are expected to think and understand and God wants us to do that. He really does. The prayers of the Lord Jesus really are very wonderful.

And when I see his prayers, and sometimes I think about the way that we pray in our meetings and in our prayer meetings, I'm curious and I ask questions. I ask questions like, why do we give God so much information when we pray? It puzzles me. You know the scripture says that we are to make our request known.

It doesn't say we have to read even a news bulletin. It says we are to make our request. I was three years at a Bible college and we had a lovely man who was a principal, but he was quaint.

He really had some amazing kind of little things he did. And he had this, no one missed chapel prayers because it was the way you got all the news. And he would kind of begin this kind of thing in chapel prayers.

And we always used to say, we always expect you to come to the end of the prayer and then say, well thank you Lord, that's the end of the news, I'll just go over the headlines again. But what would it mean for God not to know something? What would it mean for God not to know something? He wouldn't be God, you're absolutely right, he wouldn't be God. This is a true story now, I can remember as a very young Christian being in a prayer meeting and hearing someone pray.

And one of those things you kind of stop and almost open your eyes and think, what is this? And he was praying, it was something like, Lord, you'll have read the headlines this morning. And then he kind of went on with this long kind of explanation of something that would happen that he was going to pray for. Of course the secret is, this is one of those things that some people call horizontal prayers.

It wasn't really intended for God, it was intended to inform the congregation. Well let the congregation remain ignorant and talk to God and make your requests known to God. He doesn't need this information.

And in fact, if we have time, we'll make time, and at the end we'll have a little time, we'll have five minutes of prayer on condition that no one tells God anything he doesn't already know. Alright? And what we'll do is we'll ask God for things. We'll make our requests known, we'll open our hearts to him.

This is a wonderful prayer. There's very little information in this prayer, but there are heart-kind here. And this is one of them that comes through in verse four, I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the

work which thou gavest me to do.

And then verse five, And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. It's an amazing verse. It's so wonderful, in fact, that I'd like to break it up and make sure that we don't lose any of the parts of it.

Let's begin by going to the end of it. When he says here, he refers to something and he says, with thee, this is my old authorised version, with thee before the world was. I'm a war baby, I was born in 1942, and I have a couple of war memories.

I can remember quite vividly hiding in the pantry when a bomber was going over, and I can remember my father coming back from the Home Guard with his rifle. That's about as far back as my memory takes me, I guess it would have been about two. Now there are some folks here tonight that are a lot older than I am, and their memory would go back a long, long way.

With thee before the world was. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Who is this? Who is this that can pray such a thing? Father, I remember what it was like before anything was.

When there was just God, when there was just the Godhead. I remember it, Father. I remember the glory that I had with you at that time.

And maybe some of you have got a different translation here, and if I say something like this now, O Father, glorify thou me by thine own side with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. This is the Lord Jesus in His memory, remembering a time before the world was, when He was side by side with the Father, and they shared glory. Now as I said yesterday, this is either the testimony of the Son of God, an absolutely reliable, or a maniac, or a very wicked man who knows what he's doing, but is telling the most appalling lies.

What do you think it is? There aren't any other alternatives. There are no other options. It's one of those three.

Before the world was. He was with the Father. He shared the Father's glory.

I'll tell you part of the reason I'm telling you all this. I mentioned it just yesterday. It's because if we're going to even begin to speak about the price of our salvation, we're going to speak about what Jesus paid in order to make it possible for us to enter into fellowship with God again.

We need to know who He is. It's one thing to say someone gave everything, but you need to know who the person is to understand what the everything means. It's all right saying that someone paid everything he'd got, but you need to know who the person is and what he had to understand the measure of what he paid.

This is the Son with the Father in perfect harmony before the world was. I'd like you to turn with me to the book of Proverbs. There's a remarkable chapter in the book of Proverbs.

If you've got a Bible, Psalms is usually somewhere around about the middle, and Proverbs is next. Proverbs is one of three books in our Bible which was written, or the main contributor at least is Solomon, who is the wisest man that ever lived. And it seems as though they capture different times in Solomon's life.

There's this one, the book of Proverbs, where he, it's really almost like a great hymn to wisdom. And he says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And then you've got Ecclesiastes, which is the hopeless philosophy of a man who has lost his touch and grasp on God.

And none of life makes any kind of sense and he keeps on coming up against this impenetrable barrier of death and he says it's all vanity, it's hopeless, there's nothing new under the sun, the whole thing is a waste of time. That's Solomon too. And then you have the Song of Songs, which is this wonderful love song which speaks to us so strongly of Christ and His church.

But in the book of Proverbs you have this collection of wisdom and you have almost like a hymn to wisdom. And it goes on from chapter to chapter. And when you get to chapter 8, I'll just read it so that you can begin to see what happens.

Because what happens in chapter 8 is that in the middle of Solomon's hymn to wisdom, suddenly wisdom speaks back to him. This is chapter 8. Does not wisdom cry and understanding put forth her voice? Don't worry if you don't understand all this, just get the flavour of it. She stands in the top of the high places by the way in the places of the paths.

She cries at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call. My voice is to the sons of men.

O ye simple, understand wisdom, and ye fools, be of an understanding heart. Hear, for I will speak of excellent things, and the opening of my lips shall be right things, for mine mouth shall speak truth, and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness, that hath nothing fraud or perverse in them, that are plain to him that understands, and right to them that find knowledge.

So receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom, this is Solomon's testimony, is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. And then, suddenly, I, wisdom, make my dwelling place of prudence, and I discover knowledge and clever devices.

What's happening here? This is really, it's a wonderful example of what happens in prophecy. When someone is in tune with God, they're listening to God, or they're praying, or they're singing to God, and as they sing, as their heart is open, something comes back in the other direction. And it's not an empty thing, it's a voice.

It's not a voice you hear with your ears. It's not something that you hear necessarily in your mind, but you know that something is coming back. When I'm talking to younger folks, and I try to explain what prophecy is, I usually say, well, prophecy is when someone suddenly knows what God is thinking.

That's what prophecy is. Maybe for some of you, prophecy is a very strange concept. We're not talking about prophecy just in the sense of prediction.

Sometimes prophecy has to do with the future. Sometimes it has to do with the present. Sometimes God is wanting people to know how He feels about the present.

Sometimes God is wanting people to know how He feels about the past. The essence of prophecy is that God wants people to know how He is feeling, so He gives this prophecy. Next, tomorrow, or the day after

that, we'll have a look at another amazing prophetic experience that takes place in the Scriptures.

But here, wisdom sticks back to Him. And if you read what it says about itself, you suddenly begin to think, what is this that we're listening to here? Who is this that's speaking? There's a mysterious verse in the book of the Revelation, which says, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And every now and again, in amazing ways in the Old Testament, you'll hear the voice of Jesus bursting through.

You'll hear His testimony. It's not a man's testimony. It's not the testimony of the man who wrote the thing down.

It's the testimony of Jesus. It's the spirit of prophecy. This is the testimony of Jesus.

This is Jesus speaking under another title. Here, He refers to Himself as wisdom. Verse 12, I, wisdom, dwell, make my dwelling place with prudence, and discover knowledge and cunning devices.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil, pride and arrogancy. And the evil way in the forward mouth I hate. Counsel is mine and sound wisdom.

I am understanding, I have strength. By me kings reign and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. That's a Hebrew idiom. To seek someone early means to seek someone diligently.

You know, not to let other things in the day put it off. It's a picture of someone, the first thing they get up, this is the thing I'm going to do. It's number one on your to-do list.

That's what it really means. And those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me.

Yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold. Yea, than fine gold.

And my revenue in choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness in the midst of the paths of judgment that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures. And he says this in verse 22.

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old. It doesn't say the Lord created him from the beginning. It says the Lord possessed him from the beginning.

It's the same kind of truth you get in John's Gospel where it says in the beginning was the Word. It doesn't say in the beginning the Word began. It says in the beginning the Word already was.

Right at the beginning the Word was already a being. And here, before anything is made, before the beginning, the Father possesses him. It's this picture again of intimacy.

It's a picture of belonging that is within the Godhead. Now, we're talking here of things which are totally beyond the natural mind of human beings. And yet God has given us these symbols, these pictures, these words, so that at least we can get some idea of what the Godhead is like and the way that Father, Son and the Spirit have lived forever in perfect harmony.

He says here, Proverbs 22, The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the world the earth was. When there were no

depths, I was brought forth.

When there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet He had not made the earth nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the earth, when He prepared the heavens, I was there. What kind of testimony is this? I often think about what it must have been like for these old saints of God as Prophecy brought Him.

And they heard themselves saying things or writing things that were beyond, totally beyond their conception. But in faithfulness, they continued to write the thing and the consequence is that we have them here and we can read them. The testimony of Jesus.

Here it is. Before anything was, He was there. Verse 27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there.

When He set a compass upon the face of the depths, when He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep, when He gave to the sea His decree that the water should not pass His commandments, when He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him. Do you know that God spent a lot of time explaining to the Hebrew people that there was no one beside Him? I think it's Hannah who prays at first at her prayer there's none beside thee. Isaiah takes it up a couple of times in his prophecy and so does Zephaniah.

There's none beside thee. It was God's way of showing the people of Israel that He was absolutely unique. That there were no other gods who were to be compared with Him.

Or they might catch other powers which were real and still are real and are such powerful powers that you might call them gods in certain circumstances, yet they're not, if we could put it reverently, they're not in the same league. Beside me there is no God. Now God spent hundreds of years explaining that to the people of Israel because they were growing up in a culture where there was a lot of idolatry, belief in all kinds of different gods.

So He kept on making this point I am the Lord. The Lord your God is one God. He kept on saying it.

Every year they rehearsed that saying. The Lord your God is one God. Hear O Israel, the Lord your God is one God.

So when the lesson has got deeply into their conscience, the Lord Jesus comes onto the scene and He says I and my Father are one. He's not changed anything. He's just simply added an expansion to the revelation.

God is still one, but I and my Father are one. This is the picture language that He uses here. Our Father and Son in perfect fellowship.

It says this in verse 30 Then I was by Him as one brought up with Him. I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him. Can you see the picture language here? Our Father and Son enjoying each other's company, just delighting to be together.

I said, I think it was yesterday, that occasionally you hear people say well, the reason that God created man is because He wanted some fellowship. I said yesterday, I could actually tell you a song and I'll probably play it in a couple of months time. But it says something like that.

But God did not create man because He wanted fellowship. He needed nothing. He needed nothing.

He was self-sufficient. He was entire. He was complete and perfect.

God chose to create man in order to share with Him His joy, His life. But He did not create man because God had any needs. His needs are perfectly met here in the picture language of this.

I was daily His delight. I don't know what kind of days they have before eternity. I don't know what kind of days you have before time begins.

You can see already our language is breaking down. It's a struggle with the edges of our understanding. But the picture here is of something which is renewed.

You know how the Lord later on said to us, pray like this, give us this day our daily bread. That's the picture of something which needs constant renewal. It's not the picture of something which is static, which isn't disturbed in any way.

It's a picture of something which is constantly being refreshed. And here it is, I was daily His delight. It's a wonderful picture.

Let me see if I can illustrate it for you in another way, just so that you can get something at a lesser level. In the book of Isaiah, there's the account of a vision that Isaiah has. And in the vision, he sees God in all His glory on His throne.

And he sees around God seraphim, these burning creatures. And he sees, and they're crying, and the cherubim, and they're crying one to another, and they're crying, Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth, is all of your glory.

That's what they're saying. It's obvious in the book of Revelation, you put the two accounts together, that these cherubim, these supreme angelic beings, actually are speaking to one another. As one says to another.

So you need to picture something in your mind of a throne of God, and around the throne of God, four cherubim, seraphim actually just simply means the burning ones. These are holy angels. If you can put these into leagues, these are the holiest of the angels.

These are the ones who live in closest proximity to God, who are constantly available to Him. This is the picture language. You've got four of them.

And one turns to the other, and says, Holy, Holy, Holy. Heaven and earth is full of His glory. And that one turns to the next one, and says, Holy, Holy, Holy.

Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is full of Your glory. And then that one turns to the next one. And then the third one turns to the fourth one, and the fourth one turns to the first one, and the first one turns, and Isaiah saw that about 700 years before Christ, and John saw it about 100 years after Christ.

So they've been doing it for at least 850 years, and they're not getting tired. And it's not because they've been programmed. It's because as they see God in His glory, they can't get over what they see.

They never become used to it. They never become used to what God is like. These are holy angels, but they have no consciousness of their holiness.

They're only conscious of His. Their whole being is absolutely saturated in this consciousness of God. It isn't the chorus they're singing.

It's their reaction. It's their instant, day-by-day, moment-by-moment reaction, which as far as we know, we can measure it, has gone on for at least 850 years, and I guess before the world was created, and it will continue when it's over. They cannot get used to what they see.

Daily, day-by-day. And here the father and the son are daily each other's delight. This is first love forever.

This is first love forever. This is the meeting of two people, and two sets of eyes, things that obliterate everything else from a person's consciousness. The thing that the old Methodists used to describe sanctification of.

They used to call it, what was it they used to call it? The expulsive power of a new affection, they used to call it. And you only have eyes. That's another song, isn't it? You only have eyes for the one person.

Daily his delight. Go on a little bit. It goes on to say this, rejoicing always before him tremendous joy in the presence of God.

I don't know what you think God is like. Certainly, I hope, don't you think He's some kind of stern, frantic Lord? There's tremendous joy in God. One of the things that it says, one of the little stories that Jesus told, it ends up with this verse, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

In fact, when Paul wrote to Timothy, he wrote on one occasion and made reference to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Maybe you know that little phrase. Do you know that the Greek word blessed actually could be translated happy? The glorious gospel of the happy God.

Do you know God is happy? It's His nature to be happy. He is full of delight and joy. His only grief is that the creatures He created to share it with Him have become separated from all He intended.

You know, don't you, from the Bible, the revelation that we have, that the Scripture says that God created hell for the devil and his angels. You know, He didn't create it for human beings. He never had any intention of human beings ending up in that place.

And if we persist in our rebellion, there'll be no choice. But His desire is that we should be with Him. Look how it goes on here.

Rejoicing in the habitable places of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men. Can you imagine all this? This is before the creation. This is when there are no sons of men.

There's no Adam, there's no Eve, there's nothing. This is before God has laid the foundations. Before He's done anything within the Godhead, there is joy in each other, and amazingly, there's also the joy, the prospective joy, that will be shared with the sons of men.

Wow, it's mind-blowing. What it means is a billion years before the Big Bang, or whatever scientists would like to put some date on it, a billion years before that, God had you in His mind, in His heart, and looked forward to enjoying your company, and you being with Him forever. Amazing.

You're not an accident. Let me turn you back to John chapter 17. Do you think I'm exaggerating? I want to just show you something in this particular thing here.

Now, this is John chapter 17. It's the continuation of that prayer. And in verse 23 it says this.

Well, we need to go back a little bit. Verse 22. The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them in order that they may be one.

The only real unity that's possible is when people have the same nature. You can have other things before that, but you can't have unity until things have the same nature. You can tie a dog and a cat together by their tail and you'll have union, but you won't have unity.

Unity is perfect compatibility. It's absolute harmony of spirit. It's all this.

You know we spoke about God giving us eternal life. Jesus being the One who has eternal life. The reason He gives eternal life is so that we can have the same kind of life.

It makes harmony possible. It makes fellowship possible. It makes union possible.

It goes on here. The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them in order that they may be one even as we are. I in them and Thou in me that they may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me.

I'd like to read you just that last bit of that sentence again. That the world may know that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them as Thou hast loved me. Let it sink into you what it's saying.

How much do you think the Father loves the Son? Daily His delight. From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Daily fellowship.

Daily enjoyment of each other's company. It says here in my Bible that God wants the world to know. That Thou hast sent me and have loved them as You have loved me.

It's amazing. It's amazing. God doesn't love you with the leftovers of His love.

He loves you with all the fullness of His being. And because God is infinite of course He doesn't have to withdraw His love from one in order to express it to another. We are not infinite.

We are very finite. Which means that for us to get something done we have to concentrate. We have to withdraw our attention from this thing or our energy from that thing and concentrate them all on this one thing.

God's not like that. God is in this infinite. As a consequence He can give all His attention to one person and all His attention to the next without withdrawing a single part of His attention from the rest.

And He does it with everything He's made. You can't see them from where I am but I can see some kind of leaves through the windows just there. Every one of them different.

God loves every single one of them with all His being. He sustains them with all His being. And yet He doesn't withdraw His attention from one moment from everything else.

You, I hope you have heard this said God loves you. But how much does He love you? Jesus much. That's how much He loves you.

As much as He loves His own Son He loves you. You say, well you don't know me. That's okay, God knows you.

I can remember some years ago I won't tell you where I was but I was in another country and I was preaching on this particular occasion and there was a woman that I noticed in the meeting and I said something about along the lines of God could give her a brand new beginning and draw a line under the pass. And it obviously caught some attention I could see. And at the end of the meeting I could see she wanted to speak so I kind of got close to her at the door and she said, do you mean it? And I said, do I mean what? She said that God really can draw a line under the pass and give me a brand new beginning.

And I said, yes. She said, but you don't know what I've done. I said, it doesn't matter what you've done.

She said, but you don't know. I said, it doesn't matter. She said, I've murdered my husband.

I said, it doesn't matter. God can draw the line under that and make a brand new beginning. God's the only one who can do it.

I don't want to discourage you but you can't do it. It doesn't matter how much effort you put into it. It doesn't matter what your ideology is.

It doesn't matter how much you try. You will not be able to escape your past. A shadow will be cast onto your future.

There's only the one person who can make things new. So the Bible starts off like this. Is the beginning God? When you've got God, you can have a beginning.

When you haven't got God, you haven't got a beginning. You've just got a modification and it's not a lot better than it was before. But God makes things new.

This is a quotation from the book of the Revelation. Behold, he that sits upon the throne says, I make all things new. He can do it.

Let's go on. So it says here, Father, this is a prayer, I will that they also whom thou hast given be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me for you loved me before the foundation of the world. One thing that I love to do with the Scriptures is to, I think what they call kind of simultaneous equations.

It's interesting to see that. You're going to see people switching off. If I remember rightly, a simultaneous equation is, what you do is you've got certain kind of values that you know and because you know those values, you can calculate other values that you wouldn't know as comes across.

He's the teacher, not me. He'll explain it to you afterwards. Okay.

What I want to know then is what kind of love is this the Father love us with? If you look at verse 23, we looked at this bit and you'll see it says, that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. Now what I want to know is, how has the Father loved the Son? And if I go down to verse 24, I see in the last half of verse 24 that the Father has loved the Son, me, from before the foundation of the world. Now using my simultaneous equations, if he has loved you with the same love with which he has loved the Son and he's loved the Son from the foundation of the world, how long has he loved you? Before you sinned.

Before Adam sinned. That didn't stop him loving you. I've turned my back on him so many times.

He still loves you. God doesn't change His love because of what we're like. What happens is that it's not able for you to experience His love.

It's not that it's not there. I can remember, I may have told you this before, a time when I lived in a house in Birmingham and we had a lady who came to see us, I remember, and she'd got several children. One of these children, she was in some difficulty, one of these children went into our downstairs toilet, closed the door and locked it and couldn't open the door.

And she was already distressed and when she discovered that her child was locked in the toilet, she was even more distressed. When the child realized that his mother was distressed, he was even more distressed and it went on and on and on and I was trying to calm her down and try to talk to this little boy. There's no question of their love for one another.

It wasn't that they didn't love one another, they loved one another to bits. The problem was there was a barrier, they couldn't get to one another. So I just had to talk him through and to lean on the door and do this and slide this and the door burst open and he launched himself into his mother's arms.

Now Jesus came into our world to do something with the barrier that had come down in between God and man. Not to begin to love you, He always has loved you. God commends His love toward us in that while we're yet sinners, Christ died for us.

He's always loved us back. Calvary wasn't the high point of His love. It's the greatest illustration, the greatest demonstration, but it wasn't the high point.

He loved like that all the time. All the time. Isn't this an amazing prayer? I'll tell you why this is such an amazing prayer.

It comes from the consciousness of the Lord Jesus as to who He was. You see this wonderful intimacy with which He speaks to the Father. You see Him remembering things that are beyond the beginning of creation.

You see Him in this amazing companionship with His Father, the ease with which He speaks to His Father. I'm not telling you all this. He gave all this away for you and me.

This is what it cost Him. This is what He paid. This is the price that He paid, this relationship with His Father.

He gave this away in order that you and I could come from behind the locked door back into the arms of a God who never stopped loving us. It's wonderful. It's wonderful.

This is the first of our prayer. This prayer serves for our purpose in what we're doing just this few days. Just to show the relationship between the Father and the Son.

We'll move on to the other prayers in the next couple of days and see how that unfolds and all its implications. Now let's have five minutes. Pray.

If you want to love Him, love Him. If you want to tell Him that you love Him, tell Him. If you want to ask Him for something, ask Him.

Just don't give Him any more information. He's got all He needs.

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