

# The Lord's Prayer

by William MacDonald

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*The High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus is a prayer of glorification, where he prays for his own people to be kept in the world, but not of the world, and to be one as he and the Father are one.*

**Duration:** 34:07

**Topics:** "Lord's Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of Christians not being of the world. He highlights the negative state of the world and how believers have been delivered from it through the death of Christ. The preacher also emphasizes that while Christians are in the world, they should be a testimony for Christ and make a difference in the lives of others. He shares a powerful testimony of a man whose life was transformed by Christ and how his wheelchair became a platform to speak of Christ. The preacher concludes by highlighting the glory of God in the transformed lives of those who have trusted in Jesus.

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## Transcript

I'm going to read a portion of it. Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son, that your son also may glorify you.

As you have given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. And this is life eternal. They may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

I have glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do. And now, O Father, glorify me together with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was.

I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world. They were yours, you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they have known that all things which you have given me are from you.

For I have given to them the words which you have given me, and they have received them, that have known surely that I came forth from you, and they have believed that you sent me." This is often known as the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus, given just before he went to the cross. The cross was looming into view at the time. People say, well, that couldn't be the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus, because he could not be a priest while he was here on earth.

He did not come from the tribe of Levi or from the family of Aaron. That's true, he did not act as a priest here on earth, but in this prayer he's looking beyond his ministry here on earth, as we'll see as we get into the prayer. So, I really think it is correct to speak of it as the Priestly Prayer, the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus.

In this prayer he makes two pleas for himself and five for his disciples. How like the Lord Jesus, that is, always thinking of others more than of himself. Two prayers for himself, five for his disciples.

Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. He's saying this in anticipation of Calvary. The hour really hadn't come literally, but it was ever before him, and he's anticipating Calvary when he prays this prayer.

He says, Glorify thy son that thy son may also glorify thee. Glorify means to honor, but here it really refers especially to his resurrection. He prays that God will raise him from the dead in order that he might glorify God the Father in the wonderful ministry that God had given to him.

Glorify your son that your son also may glorify you. And it's marvelous to think of all the glory that has come to God the Father as a result of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. To think of the millions of people who have been saved down through the centuries, those who will be honoring God the Father, glorifying him throughout all eternity, and it all goes back to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

So here, when he uses the word glorify, he's referring especially to his resurrection, praying that God will raise him from the dead. Elsewhere in the Gospel of John, the Lord Jesus said, Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

Now is the Son of Man glorified. Again, he was looking forward to the cross, to his death, burial and resurrection, and God is glorified in him. The glory that came to God the Father as a result of Christ's work at Calvary.

If God be glorified in him, and that if is the if of since, not condition, since God is God will glorify him in himself, the resurrection of Christ, and will straightway glorify him. He did it in three days. He raised him from the dead in three days.

He goes on to pray, As you have given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. This is part of the fruit of the Lord Jesus' work at the cross of Calvary. That the Lord Jesus was given authority over all mankind, over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him.

You say, well how do I know whether I was given to him or not? How do I know if I'm among that number at the end of verse two? That he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him. There's only one way a person can ever know if he's included in the latter part of verse two, and that is by trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. When you do that, you know that you've been given by God the Father to God the Son.

The Bible considers that God, that no man can come Christ except the Father draw him, teaches that. But it also teaches whosoever will may come, and the only way you can ever know whether you're elect or not is by coming in repentance and faith to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is eternal life that they may know you,

the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Eternal life is coming to know God, the only true God. That differentiates God from idols. Idols purport to be God, and there are, of course, mythological gods of Greece and Egypt and other countries, gods of myth.

But the Lord our God is the true and living God. Those are false and dead gods, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. So, it's wonderful to remind ourselves that eternal life is in a person.

He that has the Son of God has a life. He that has not the Son of God has not life. When you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, when you take him as your own, you have eternal life.

The Savior says in verse 4, "...I have glorified you upon the earth." This speaks to that wonderful life lived down here in Palestine 2,000 years ago. God was greatly glorified during those years, the years of his sinless, thoughtless son walking here below. But I think it goes beyond his life here on earth.

It goes to the cross, and he's anticipating his work there on the cross, his death and his burial and his resurrection. That's why he can say in verse 4, "...I have finished the work which he gave me to do." You say, well, he hadn't finished it. He hadn't died yet.

No, once again, the Lord is looking forward to that completed work on Calvary. He's anticipating it. He's speaking as if it had already taken place.

When I read verse 4, "...I have finished the work which he gave me to do." I often think of this. The Lord Jesus is the only one who could ever use those words. I don't care what kind of a life we've lived, and how much we've done in the service of the Lord, our work is never finished.

But his was, "...I have finished the work which you gave me to do." And he says, "...and now, O Father, glorify me together with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was." Glorify me together with yourself. That's the glorification, not only of resurrection from the dead, but of ascension back to heaven. That's what the Lord Jesus is praying here.

In verse 1, he's praying for the resurrection. Here he's praying for his ascension back into heaven. Glorify me together with yourself means glorify me in your presence, in your presence.

And then he says, "...with the glory which I had with you before the world was." What is that glory that the Lord Jesus is speaking about here? The glory which I had with you before the world was? Well, first of all, let me say that there were two glories which he had in heaven before he ever came down to earth. There was his basic glory of deity. He's the glory of the Son of Man, the glory of absolute equality with God the Father.

I call that his personal glory. But, there was something else. There was his traditional glory.

He was there in heaven, the object of angelic worship. All the hosts of heaven worshiping him, and he was there with the Father in a scene of perfect fellowship. Nothing there could mar the beauty and wonder of that scene.

There was his personal glory, and there was his traditional glory. Which one is he referring to here? Glorify me together with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was. Here, of course, it's only referring to his traditional glory.

That's what he laid aside when he came down to the earth. He didn't lay aside his personal glory. The Lord Jesus was just as much God when he came into this world as he was before the world was ever made.

But, he laid aside that traditional glory and came down to this earth as a man to be pit upon, to be ill-treated, to be arrested, tried, crucified and buried. That's the glory which he's speaking about here in verse 5. You have that in Philippians 2. He was equal with God. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

He laid aside that traditional glory and came down to the earth as a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world. He's speaking here particularly of his disciples, particularly of the eleven, excluding Judas, of course.

I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world. It was the father who gave those disciples to the Lord Jesus Christ in answer to his prayer. They were yours, you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

It's really wonderful to hear of the loving, appreciative words which the Lord uses to describe the eleven. They have kept your word. Well, I don't think if he were writing the gospel, we would have said that, because we think so much of their failures and our own failures, but the Lord Jesus can look beyond that, and he can see the good in these men and how they really kept the word of the Lord Jesus.

Now they have known that all things which you have given me are from you. For I have given to them the words which you have given me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from you, and they have believed that you sent me." Once again, I think he's looking beyond the cross, he's looking beyond the tomb, he's looking to the resurrection when the disciples had a new and deeper appreciation of the Lord Jesus, of his person, and of his word. In the next verse, he says, I pray for them.

It's a wonderful thing to be the object of the prayers of the Lord Jesus. If you're here saved by the grace of God, he prays for you. The Holy Spirit prays for you.

Probably we couldn't go on another day by ourselves if the Lord Jesus wasn't praying for us. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world.

Some people misunderstand that verse, and they say we shouldn't pray for the world. Jesus didn't pray for the world. We shouldn't pray for the world, but I think that this is the point.

He's speaking here as high priest, and as high priest he doesn't pray for the world. His ministry as high priest is particularly for his own people, but certainly the Lord Jesus prayed for the world in another sense. He died for the world.

He gave his life for the world, poured out his blood for the world, and to say that he's not interested in the salvation of men is really going too far. I do not pray for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. This is in his role as our great high priest.

He prays for his own, and all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. Well, that's an astounding statement to think that the Lord of life and glory is glorified in his followers, and that means that if you're a believer in the Lord Jesus, have you really been cleansed by the blood of Christ? Have you really been born again? God is glorified in you. That's really enough to startle a person, isn't it? How is

God glorified in you? Well, first of all, there's been a change.

When you were saved, you became a new creation in Christ Jesus. You became a transformed individual. Last weekend, I was in Moline, Illinois, and a very young brother came to me.

He was in a wheelchair, and he's only been saved a short time. Before he was saved, he was a drug addict. He was on alcohol.

He was living a life of fornication. Deep, deep in sin, and then the Lord Jesus came into his life. He trusted Christ as his Savior, and now that wheelchair is his purpose, and he was rejoicing that he has opportunity to speak of Christ from that wheelchair that he never would have had if he wasn't in a wheelchair.

It has opened up a wonderful ministry for him. I'm going to tell you, God is glorified in that. God is glorified in the transformed lives of people who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and that touches my heart.

When I read those words, I am glorified in them. I tell you, the Lord Jesus is wonderful, isn't he? Now, I am no longer in the world. Well, once again, he's looking forward.

He was in the world when he prayed this, so he was looking forward to the time when he would die, when he would be buried, when he would rise from the dead, and ascend back into heaven. Now, I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world. Can I come to you, Holy Father, keep through your name those whom you have given me, that they may be one as we are.

He's praying for his own in the world. Just let me say a word about the world. Some of you, perhaps most of you, have been deeply distressed by the news that you've been reading, by the terrible decline in moral values and family values in the United States today, by the scandal, by the pattern of lying, by the pattern of perjury, by the filth and affinity that are in the newspapers and on the TV.

Here, friends, that's the world. You're getting a real taste of what the world is today. The world is showing itself for what it is.

This is a world of ungodly men, the world of unsaved men, and so the Lord Jesus has his people here in the midst of that filth, in the midst of an X-rated society, and he's praying for them to be kept. Not that they be taken out of the world, but that they be kept in the world, kept for himself and security. Now, I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to you, Holy Fathers.

Holy Fathers. Hmm. Just think of what, when I read those words, I think of what an abomination is for any man, like the Pope of Rome, to allow him to be called Holy Fathers.

Where do men ever get this? Arrogating to himself a title that belongs to God the Father. Will this go unpunished? I don't think it'll go unpunished. I think a count is going to be given someday for that.

There's only one Holy Father. That's the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I come to you, Holy Fathers, keep through your name those whom you have given me, that they may be one as we are.

Well, this prayer is repeated again as we go down, and what is the Lord Jesus praying for here? Is he praying that we all be of the same denomination? No, he's not praying that. Denominations are not found in the word of God. Only one church made up of all true believers.

He's not praying for that. Is he praying for a kind of a worldwide communion, a world council of churches, so all Christians come together in unity, no matter what their doctrine is? No, he's not praying for that. What is he praying when he prays that they all may be one as we are? Well, I'll tell you what he's praying for.

He's praying that his people might be godly people. That's what he's praying for. He's praying that his people might be holy people.

He's praying that when the world looks at them, they'll see something that makes them think of God, something that makes them think of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we'll come to that further on down in the chapter. While I was with him in the world, I kept him in your name. It was a wonderful privilege to be with the Lord Jesus here when he was here on earth, wasn't it? And yet it's more wonderful to be with him now that he's in heaven, and we have the Holy Spirit.

Those whom you gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of tradition. There's a problem in this verse. It almost sounds as if God gave twelve to the Lord Jesus, and one of the twelve is lost.

It doesn't really mean that. Only the eleven were given to the Lord Jesus. The sentence should read this way.

Those whom you gave me I have kept, that's the eleventh. None of them is lost, that's the eleventh, but the son of tradition is lost. The son of tradition was never saved.

Judas was never saved, never really belonged to Christ, and he's lost. He was never given by God the Father to the Lord Jesus. So, I read that those whom you gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost but the son of tradition is lost.

The son of tradition refers to his destiny, indeed of Judas. He went to his own place, and his own place was tradition, everlasting punishment, everlasting destruction, that the scripture might be fulfilled. And, of course, Old Testament scriptures prophesied that the Lord Jesus would be betrayed, didn't he? My own familiar friend has lifted up his heel against me, the scripture says.

But now I come to you, and these things I seek in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. That's wonderful, isn't it? The Lord Jesus is, I mean, Calvary, the darkness of Calvary, Gethsemane, and Calvary's ahead of him. What's his own people might have joy? Marvelous, really, when you stop to think of it.

I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. If you really belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, and bear a testimony for sin, you'll be hated by the world. Beware when all men speak well of you, because the more Christ-like a person is, the more he'll be hated by the world.

Jesus said, they are not, his people are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. How much was Christ of the world? Well, he was not of the world at all. How much should we be of the world? We should not be of the world at all.

I mentioned a few minutes ago about the terrible picture we're getting of the world in the United States today, and it's getting worse all the time. Dear friends, if you're here today unsaved, you belong to that. You belong to that.

If you're saved, you've been delivered from that by the death of Christ. He saved us from this present evil world, and I tell you, that's a wonderful fruit of our salvation. I do not pray that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil ones.

He wants his people to be here in the world, witnessing for him, being a testimony for him, showing the world that when Christ comes into a life, he makes a difference in that life. It's funny how Christians oftentimes like to gather together in Christian communities, villages, and so forth, where they're all one, and everybody loves one another, and everything is beautiful. But God's will is that we should be in the world, witnessing for the world, not taking anything of the character of the world upon ourselves.

Sanctify them by your truth. Verse 17, your word is truth. Sanctify means to set apart.

Set them apart from the world to God. How? By the word of God. This is the word of God.

I love this word, because people go through life looking for the truth. You say, well, have you found the truth? Well, I'm still searching for it. Yeah, but we don't have the search for it.

It's all here within the covers of the Bible. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth.

Truth is what God says about something. As you have sent me into the world, I have also sent them into the world. That's it.

He sent them into the world with a mission. Go into all the world and preach the gospel. Make disciples of all nations, and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

How did the Lord Jesus sanctify himself? He set himself apart. How did he set himself apart? He set himself apart for the work of salvation, for his death on the cross, and for his subsequent ministry to us in the world. For their sakes I sanctify them.

Sanctify doesn't mean to make holy. The Lord Jesus couldn't make himself holy. He already was holy.

He always is holy. No way in which he could make himself holy, but he could set himself apart, and here the Lord Jesus sets himself apart for the ministry which the Lord Father, which the Father gave him to do, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. That tells me that when you, every day when you read your bible, when you have a daily quiet time, you're sanctified by the truth.

The truth tends to set you apart from the world. When you neglect the word of God, it's easy just to watch your television and see all the sex and the violence, and not be repelled by it at all. Now, up until this point in verse 19, he's been praying primarily for the apostles, primarily for the apostles.

Now, surprise, he's going to pray for you, and I think that's a tremendous thrill. I think it's a tremendous thrill to read John 17 and realize that in this statute, before his death, in anticipation of his death, he prayed for you, that you really belonged to him. He said, really? Yes.

Verse 20, I do not pray for these alone, that's for the eleven, but also for those who will believe in me through their words. That refers to all of us who have heard the words of the apostles in the new testament, the testimony of the apostles, and have believed it, and have been to hear the Lord Jesus is actually praying for us. Doesn't that make the bible an exciting book to you? That they all may be one as you, father, are in me, and I in you, that the world also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent them.

This verse is a favorite of the so-called ecumenical movement, this great movement in the world today toward a world church, and they say the will of Jesus was that we all be one, so let's all federate in one great church movement. These very strong evangelical leaders in the United States today are moving toward Rome, moving toward trying to establish a world church. Doctrine means nothing to them.

Unity is the great thing. Is that what the Lord is praying for here? No. Read it carefully, that they all may be one as you, father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me.

What is he praying for? Once again, I said he's praying that his people might be Christ-like, that they might be godly, god-like. What else will ever convince the world? You can argue with the world, all of it, but I tell you what the world is waiting to see is a transformed life, and that's what the Lord is praying for here. Not for a great denominational unity or anything of the sort, but that's what the Lord is praying for here.

Not for a great denominational unity or anything of the sort, but for Christians who show the life of Christ to the world, that the world may believe that you have sent me, and the glory which you gave me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one. That's a tremendous statement. He said that he has given a glory to his people.

Well, there's a lot contained in that verse. It may even look forward to the millennium, when we come back and reign with Christ, the bride of Christ, and reign with him, but I'm sure there are many other glories included in this wonderful verse of scripture. I in them, and you in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that you have sent me, and have loved them as you have loved me.

Don't miss the latter part of verse 23. If you belong to Christ, God the Father loves you with the same love that he loves his sons. I tell you, that's enough to bow our hearts in worship.

I often say, if you're a believer, God could not love you more than he loves you at this present moment. Why? Because he loves you with the same love that he loves his sons. When I read that, I know that no man ever wrote the Bible.

I mean, I knew men were penmen. Their pens wrote it, but this is the word of God, and only God would ever say something like that. Father, I desire that they all to whom you gave me may be with me.

This is it. The heart of the Lord Jesus will not be fully satisfied until all the redeemed are with him where he is, that they may behold my glory which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world. The glory which you gave me, this is what we call an acquired glory, an acquired glory.

It's not part just of his essential glory, of his positional glory, but of an acquired glory. What is that? The glory which is in the glory of Saviorhood. The glory of Saviorhood.

The Lord Jesus could never have become our Savior if he hadn't come down to the world, suffered, bled, and died for us. For you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you sent me.

And I have declared to them your name, and will declare it, that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them. A wonderful prayer of the Lord Jesus, first for his disciples, his apostles, and then for us here sitting in Bethany today. It's a wonderful thing to belong to Christ, isn't it? To be the object of his prayers, to be coming from the world which is really making us tick at the present time, to even read

about it, and to know that one day we're going to behold his glory in heaven because he loved us.

So, shall we pose in prayer? Think of what grace has done for us. Lord, no human mind would have ever imagined it, but we just want to bow our hearts at the close of this meeting and give thanks to you and to your lovely Son, the Lord Jesus, and to pray for any who still belong to the world here who still rejoice in the things of the world, and have never been set apart to yourself by the blood of Christ. We pray that any such might come to the Savior in repentance and in faith, acknowledging him to be the only Lord and Savior.

We ask it as we give our thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.

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