

EASTER 2023 JESUS' PRAYER

At the end of 2022, Element went through a 13-week series on prayer. We said that, **"Prayer is a continuing conversation that God has started through His Word and provided by His grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with Him."** Prayer starts with God revealing Himself to us through His Spirit and His written word. In response, we can know Him and enjoy and experience relationship lived with Him.

At the end of the Prayer Series, we looked at various case studies of people whose prayers are in the Bible and what their prayers can teach us. Today we are reflecting back to that series by looking at an actual prayer that Jesus Himself prayed in John 17—right before His death and ultimate resurrection. In this prayer, we see that, unlike us, when Jesus knows an outcome is immutable (unchangeable), He actually prays more. His prayer leads to three questions:

- 1. Why did Jesus pray (and why should we)?** Jesus prayed because His prayer led to relationship with the Father. Jesus didn't pray to change what God was going to do; He prayed to develop relationship and greater intimacy with the Father.
- 2. What did Jesus pray for (and what should we pray for)?** Jesus prayed for God's glory to be known. Understanding God's glory brings a deeper understanding of who God is.
- 3. Why did Jesus pray *this way* (and why should we)?** Jesus knows that when we understand the Glory of God, which is most clearly portrayed in Jesus' death and resurrection, the result will be the changed lives of His people.

True relationship with God will come when we behold His glory. When we behold His glory and see Him as He is, we will understand how we are saved by the good news of His death of resurrection. The result of understanding the Gospel will lead to lives that are surrendered to Jesus and restored relationship with God as we are adopted into His family.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

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| John 17:1 | Ephesians 1:15-23 | 2 Corinthians 3:18 |
| Revelation 3:20 | Ephesians 3:14-17 | 2 Corinthians 4:6 |
| John 17:3-5 | Exodus 33:18 | John 17:24 |

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Read through Jesus' full prayer in John 17.

- How has your prayer life changed since our prayer series last year?
- What things decrease your desire to pray?
- Why do you pray? Why not if you don't?
- Why *should* we pray?
- Jesus prays for relationship. What does this look like for you?
- What is God's glory and what does it mean to pray for the Glory of God?
- Paul says you will be transformed into the likeness of whatever is most weighty to you, whether something or someone. What holds weight in your life?
- How can you ascribe more weight/significance to God's glory and nothing else?

Prayer: Ask God to show you *His* glory. Where you have doubts/fears/or love of other things other than Him, ask for His glory to be revealed to you. Ask God to give you clarity and honesty in examining your life, and for Him to re-align your priorities and devotion. Ask God to lead you to a greater understanding of the Gospel.

PRAYER STARTERS

Here are some starter topics to help you direct your prayers...

Element – Pray for moving from self-focus to Kingdom-focus; Humility, Service, Sacrifice.

Personal Growth – Pray for living present and available to the Spirit's leading and promptings; divine appointments.

World – Pray for meeting needs through acts of love; Element's global outreach initiatives.

Gospel Advancement – Pray for understanding of the Gospel so as to apply in everyday life situations with the unchurched, showing the path to belief.

Listen to the entire PRAYER series at ourelement.org/prayer