

## Gospel reflections

### John 17:1-11

The gospel reading for this Sunday is Jesus' final prayer before being arrested and draws to a close the focus we have had on Jesus' farewell chapters. In John's gospel, Jesus' final prayer occurs in front of the disciples at the close of the last supper and not, as in other gospels, in the garden of Gethsemane while his disciples fall asleep nearby. In this passage we see Jesus' awareness that while his ministry is almost complete, the work of his followers has barely begun. The passage also conveys the great concern Jesus has for his disciples.

This week, rather than focussing on possible interpretations of the passage, I have included a reflection on the first section of the reading and a prayer to help you imagine what it might have been like to overhear Jesus pray. I hope that you can find some time this week to pause and listen to Jesus' words for you.

Jesus begins the prayer in John 17:1; After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed. He said,

"Father, the time has come. Bring glory to your Son. Then your Son will bring glory to you. <sup>2</sup> You gave him authority over all people. He gives eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And what is eternal life? It is knowing you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth. I have finished the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> So now, Father, give glory to me in heaven where your throne is. Give me the glory I had with you before the world began."

Points to ponder

- ❖ Listening to Jesus we have real insight into the intimate and loving relationship between the Father and the Son.
- ❖ Glory can mean 'to make known'. Jesus makes known the God who loves us. John wrote the gospel so that we might know and believe (John 3:16, John 20:31). How do we, as disciples, make Jesus known in our communities so that they might believe?
- ❖ Jesus describes eternal life as knowing God and Jesus. It is that simple. It is not just a hope for the future it is here and now. What new perspectives does Jesus' description provide?

Jesus goes on to show his great concern for the disciples and his love for those who belong to him and those who will come to know him through the disciples. The prayer is written for those who belong to Jesus. It is written for us. It can be a prayer for you and your community. Imagine overhearing Jesus pray this for you.

<sup>9</sup> I pray for ...(insert your name and that of your community).

I am not praying for the world. I am praying for those you have given me because they are yours.

<sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. Glory has come to me because of my disciples.

<sup>11</sup> I will not remain in the world any longer. But my disciples are still in the world, and I am coming to you.

Holy Father, keep (insert your name and your community) safe by the power of your name. It is the name you gave me.

Keep them safe so they can be one, just as you and I are one."

Jesus' prayer reminds us that we belong to God, we are safe, loved and accepted and have been called to make God known. Perhaps knowledge of what was to come provided the need for Jesus to pray that his followers be one. Maybe without unity and each other, they would not survive and continue the work that Jesus had begun. What a great framing for the Pentecost season which is to come.

I know and pray that God will hold you close today and always.

Blessings,

Anne

## Additional insights

Such a text should be read, meditated on, thought, read again, repeated, savored, as one does with a good sweet in the mouth. One turns it over and over in the mouth until it is finished. For this, close your eyes, keep silence within you and listen to Jesus who speaks to you, transmitting in His Testament His greatest concern, His last will. Try to discover which point Jesus insists on the most and which points He considers the most important. <https://ocarm.org/en/content/lectio/lectio-divina-john-171-11a>

## Prayer of Petition

(John 17)

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who prayed for your disciples that they might be one,  
even as you are one with the Father;  
draw us to yourself,  
that in common love and obedience to you  
we may be united to one another,  
in the fellowship of the one Spirit,  
that the world may believe that you are Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**

— written by William Temple (1881-1944).

In reference to John 17:1-11

It is, perhaps, one of the most relevant and truthful definitions of what Pentecost is supposed to be as disciples of Christ. Jesus is no longer in the world. The incarnation is over. Jesus has been resurrected. He ascended to the Father from whence he came (1:1). But *we* are still in the world, Jesus' works are now in our hands (14:12), and Jesus is counting on us to be his presence in the wake of his absence (21:15-17). From

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=1996](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1996)

Jesus in John's gospel

<https://bibleproject.com/podcast/theme-god-e20-jesus-identity-johns-gospel/>