

The Prayer of Jesus

We should pray for one another. When praying for our brothers and sisters, we mostly remember their problems or needs. While this is not wrong, it's more important to pray for them according to the pattern Jesus used in praying for His disciples. Let us look closely at this prayer in John 17.

1. **First Jesus 'reminds' the Father of their obedience.** Despite His disciples' immature behaviour on many occasions- they quarrelled, would not keep watch in prayer, etc- the Lord chose only to say: "They have believed... they have obeyed Your word..." We must also remind God, that our Christian friends have a special claim to His care for they have 'believed' and 'obeyed'.
2. **He prayed for their protection.** Do we realize how much our friends need this prayer? As Christians, the enemy seeks to destroy us. He tries to make us fall away. The attack is relentless; but Jesus has shown us a way out. Simply pray: Father, protect us by the power of Your name. Deliver us (my friends and myself) from the evil one... help us to not yield to temptation.
3. **He prayed for their unity.** How precious this is. If we are united, then we are strong. When the enemy sees the love between us, he trembles – for he sees an unshakable army. No wonder his agents work 'overtime' to sow strife and discontentment. But let us join Jesus each day in this heartfelt cry: O Father may we be one, as Jesus is one with You. Grant us the grace to love each other deeply from the heart.
4. **Jesus prayed for them to be sanctified or made holy.** Each day your friend goes out to face the corruption in the world; so we must pray for them to remain untainted. Jesus shows us that His truth sanctifies us. Pray then: Father, please help us and them to be separate from this world. Keep us pure and holy, for the sake of Jesus.
5. **He prayed for them to remain in Him and see His glory.** Stephen the first Christian martyr, as he was being stoned, looked up and cried: "I see heaven open and the Son of Man seated at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:56) His last prayer, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them", was identical to Christ's. Seeing the glory of the Risen Christ spurs us on to make great sacrifices and to love our persecutors. Like Stephen, we learn to rejoice in our sufferings and to pray for our enemies. What greater prayer can we choose for our friends than this: "Father, may they remain in Your Son and see His glory!"