

Monday - Week Forty-five

John - Lesson twenty-nine: Jesus' prayer (17:1-26)

1. These words catch the magnificence of Jesus' prayer. Someone wrote about John 17: "We are brought by this prayer to the mercy-seat, into the heaven of heavens, to the very heart of God, and we find there a presentation of the most mysterious and incomprehensible love to the human race, embodied in the person, enshrined in the words, of the only-begotten Son." In a nutshell, what makes this prayer unique and profound?
2. The first five words of this prayer are filled with more meaning than we can imagine - "Father, the time has come." For all time the plan of salvation was moving to fulfillment. Now, finally, the time had come. How would the Father glorify the Son and the Son glorify the Father? (v 1)
3. How could Jesus say that His work was complete? (After all, He had talked to relatively few people in the world).

How can we use this truth as we go through our busy days?

4. Sometimes the devil tempts us to think that no one cares about us. Another utter lie from that old snake! How does verse 11 set the record straight?
5. Jesus prays for unity among believers. What happened to Christianity? There are so many divisions now. Do verses 20 and 21 support today's movement for one big church (ecumenicalism)? Explain. (Hint: look at verse 23 - where does true unity come from?)

Read: Psalm 50; Proverbs 11.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, give our congregation true unity that springs from the truth found in the Bible. I ask this in Jesus' name; Amen.

Tuesday - Week Forty-five

John - Lesson thirty: Jesus arrested (18:1-12)

1. Judas knew where Jesus and His disciples would be. The disciples and Jesus must have used this spot often. Where are your favorite "spots" to pray and meditate?
2. Explain: That night one man could have arrested Jesus.
3. Jesus knew everything that would happen to Him (v 4). Why does that make His suffering and death even greater?
4. Verse 5 tells us that Judas was standing with the enemy. His "trick" (with the kiss) hadn't fooled Jesus at all; Jesus even confronted him about it (Luke 22:48). What a sad sight that must have been - a disciple of the Savior standing with His enemies. Think of some examples of Christians (or former Christians) who are "standing with" Christ's enemies.
5. Verse 6 is an intriguing verse. With a short sentence Jesus flattened an entire detachment of soldiers. What important lesson was Jesus teaching those soldiers and leaders?

What a lesson this is for Christ's Church. The Savior is in complete control even at the darkest moments. Think of some dark moments in the church's history (or your history) where Christ was at work.
6. Peter made a mistake. He did not understand that Jesus had to be arrested so He could suffer and die. Besides that, he was not making it any easier for Jesus to protect the disciples. Yet, what do we admire just a bit in Peter's action?
7. Read verse 11 carefully. What had changed since Jesus' prayer in the Garden just a short time before?

Read: Psalm 51; Proverbs 12.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, today I read the account of Jesus' arrest. Thank You for His incredible love for me. In His name; Amen.

Wednesday - Week Forty-five

Catechism Review

Read Questions 337-341

1. God's name stands for everything about Him. In this petition we pray that we will keep His name holy. We keep His name holy by teaching His Word faithfully and living according to it. Why are the two connected?

2. Have you been faithful in praying for your pastor lately? How does this petition give you an excellent reason for you to pray for him?

3. This petition also reminds us to pray for our Synod's college and seminary. Why is the training of our future teachers and pastors so important?

What might you prayer for the professors of those schools?

4. How does false teaching dishonor God's name?

5. How does our sin dishonor God's name?

Read: Psalm 52; Proverbs 13.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, guide me to keep Your name holy. Amen.

Thursday - Week Forty-five

John - Lesson thirty-one: The trials of Jesus (18:13-19:15)

1. After arresting Jesus the soldiers took Jesus to Annas. Annas had been the high priest from 6-15 AD before he was deposed by the Roman governor. His son-in-law, Caiphus, was one of his successors. The Jews no doubt sent Jesus to Annas to try to come up with some formal charges against Jesus. Why did they need to do that? (In other words, what huge problem did the Jewish leaders have?).
2. Many people have speculated why John was so well known at the high priest's courtyard. In any case, John was so well known that he could get Peter in as well. Although it's not spelled out, John probably went into the hall where Jesus was being questioned. He was an eye witness. Peter stayed outside by the fire. Why should Peter have stayed away from this whole area?

What are some examples of us not listening to God's warnings?

Yet what do we admire in Peter?

3. Annas' trial was highly illegal. Not only were there no witnesses, Annas questioned Jesus just to find charges (a fishing expedition). How did Jesus respond to these tactics? (v 20-21)
4. Peter's denial of Jesus is well-known to us. Luke tells us that before Peter ran out weeping Jesus looked at him (Luke 22:61). Everything had gone so quickly for Peter. Certainly the devil is a roaring lion seeking people to devour (1 Peter 5:8). How does the devil sometimes mount massive lightning attacks on you?
5. Jesus was on a whole different level than Pontius Pilate. Imagine, the Son of God was on trial before a heathen agnostic. Pilate didn't know what truth was. In reality "Truth" was standing in front of him! Pilate's education and training blinded him to the Savior. Give examples of this indifferent, skeptical view today.

Read: Psalm 53; Proverbs 14.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I marvel at the depth of Jesus' love. Amen.

Friday - Week Forty-five

John - Lesson thirty-two: Crucifixion and burial (19:16-42)

1. John simply says that they crucified Him. So much in one word! Crucifixion involved incredible amounts of pain - headaches from blood rushes, swelling of the wounds, severe breathing troubles, etc. Yet it sometimes took days to die. What might we miss if we simply dwell on the physical horror of crucifixion?

2. The Jews wanted Pilate to change the sign he posted on Jesus' cross (v 19). Pilate knew that the Jews had charged Him with being the King. Pilate wouldn't have crucified Jesus for simply claiming to be a king. Imagine, while Pilate and the Jews were playing their political games, the Son of God was paying for their (and everyone's) sins. What can we do to keep from missing important spiritual matters?

4. John does not tell us about the three hours of darkness. At the end of that time Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" Had God really forsaken Jesus? Explain.

5. After Jesus had taken a drink He said, "It is finished." These words out to be written on our hearts in big letters. These three English words are the translation of one Greek word: tetelesthai. This word was written on bills that had been paid. Today we might say "Paid in full." Why does this word mean so much here?

6. Joseph of Arimathea suddenly became courageous. Pastor Wenzel comments, "The death of Jesus has since then driven many to heroic acts of daring for their master." What causes this boldness?

7. We have met Nicodemus before. Trace the development of his faith in the following verses: A. John 3 B. John 7:50 C. John 19:39

Think of times in your life when your faith matured.

Read: Psalm 54; Proverbs 15.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, strengthen my faith as You strengthened Nicodemus' faith. Focus me on Your Son. In His name; Amen.