

4 we know these things were combined against Him, we know that shortly Judas would betray Him. And He by His suffering would be crucified and it would seem that Satan was trying to conquer Him.

But first we see that He pleads that His own relationship, that He might glorify Thy Son, He says. He is asking God to do this. That He does not want to renounce Himself, His Sonship.

He prays that his time and hour has come. The hour for His death. And how often He had talked about this hour -- that no one knew about it. But this was the most critical time according to the clock, because the hour had come. The battle between Heaven and Hell must now be fought. And the great cause to honor God was bound up in this. It was very much like David and Goliath going down into the valley at the sound of the trumpet for battle. Jesus was going forth now for battle with Satan. And His time had arrived. And He had requested that the glory be exhalted.

He is praying here in the next place for the Father's own interest. He is concerned, and is concentrating on this whole undertaking to the glory of the Father. He is not thinking especially what is going to happen to Him.

What does this teach us. What is this prayer of Jesus for Himself, this aim of His prayer. What should be the aim

*a question number had asked the District Superintendent 1  
that a pastor be assigned to his community. How big a man  
do you want? the Superintendent asked. "Well Elder, The wing man  
of San Rafael,"*  
**"THE SIGNIFICANT PRAYER"**  
*"We are not overly particular but when he's on his knees we  
would like to have him reach heaven!"*  
JOHN 17

#### INTRODUCTION:

Jesus had finished his discourse in the upper room which covers Chapter 14 and 15 and 16, and now we come to a new phase in His life when we see the circumstances of prayer as Jesus prayed for himself the twelve disciples, and for all believers of all time. Now the prayer recorded here was offered in the presence of the hearing of the disciples with whom Jesus had been talking. There is no sufficient reason to question this record because it is sublime, He is ending his personal work, and we cannot imagine a better ending than that or remembering Jesus in the spirit of prayer. The deep impression this must have made upon His disciples. John certainly was impressed by this prayer because he records it for God's people. And it is not an impossibility that he should remember this prayer for he has said in the previous chapter that the Holy Spirit would bring to remembrance the things that a man needed to know. And when Jesus prays for himself, He is not merely praying for His own person but it is in view of His work for God. And when He prays for His disciples, it is that

they might continue the same work. And when He prays for all the believers, it is that they might also carry on His work.

The place of this prayer was in the midst of a little group with Jesus standing in the center. We do not know whether He was in the temple now, or whether he was in some secluded spot, whether He had left the Upper Room, whether he was out in the garden, but the time of this prayer was just after He had spoken His (farewell message) to His disciples. And He begins to pray unto the Father. Now He had already preached and now He was praying. The pass-over was at hand, the Lord's Supper had been given and celebrated together and now He has His little family together for prayer. And I think this is a great part of prayer even today. That we should include our friends, our families, and others. You will remember then in parting, Jacob died blessing his twelve sons that he left behind. When Moses died, he blessed the twelve tribes. Now when Jesus died, He blessed His twelve disciples. And we will note that He comes to pray with tender affection as a high priest who is about to be sacrificed as the offering on the cross. We are impressed by the fervor of this design. We are impressed by the way in which Jesus approached prayer. Therefore I wish to consider this chapter under the follow-

ing heads: I - Confirmation Of His Mission - Verse 1-5

II - Committing The Disciples To The Father  
Verse 6-18 <sup>19</sup>

III - A Continuing Request - Verse 20-23

IV - Companionship In Glory - Verse 24-26

I - Confirmation Of His Mission - Verse 1-5.

We are impressed with Jesus as He lifts up His eyes to Heaven, in the beginning of this chapter. It catches the attention. He is in the spirit of prayer. This is a natural act in prayer. Especially when one has confidence in God. For God as we conceive is Heaven. And John, the old man, rejoices through the aid of the Holy Spirit. Jesus begins to pray.

#### CARPETS NOT WORN

The trouble with those folks is they don't pray enough. The carpet in front of their mirrors is worn threadbare, while at the sides of their beds, where they should kneel in prayer, the rug is as good as the day they put it down.

Billy Sunday

In Verse 1, he describes how He came, and that His hour was at hand. He made this prayer to God, first of all for Himself. This encourages people to pray. Pray when you are destitute. Pray when you are in need. Christ began with prayer for Himself, afterwards for His disciples. We must love and pray for our neighbors. We must pray for ourselves as well. And Christ prayed for Himself. Sometimes we forget to even do this. He prayed that He might glorify and be glorified in the world. While the powers of darkness were everywhere,

when He lived with the Father. His former position, he prays concerning. He has come down and humbled Himself and now He is looking forward to the time when He might go back to His former state. Here is a symbol. This prayer is sometimes called the high priestly prayer. Lev. 16:6 and 33. The great high priest entered into the Holy of Holies to offer the blood of a lamb for the sin of the people on the day of atonement. And into God's presence He went for the mercy seat. Hebrews 9:24. Now we get the contrast, our wonderful Christ, our faithful high priest is about to return to the Father and go into his presence with the blood and the wound. This is an infallible token of His victory over death and also half of our redemption.

## II. Committing The Disciples To The Father - Verse 6-18.

This certainly is a wonderful prayer because Jesus is going to pray now for Himself, and for His disciples. When we come to think about this prayer, we are well aware that He is not praying for angels but He is praying for the children of men. He prays for those that were given to Him. Which means the disciples that had attended Him, that had received His word, that had believed in Him.

Later on we shall see that He prays for all of those

of your prayer. In all your designs and desires, there should be one aim -- to honor and glorify God. The chief end of man we know in one creed says it is to glorify God. And so a Christian in every trying hour, whether he is dying or whether he is living, it ought to be that God will help Him to stand. God will stand by him, appear for him, and that he will be glorified through Him. This is the consciousness of Christ. It is not merely strength to meet the cross he is praying for, but He is praying for the power to be able to glorify God through death, through the resurrection, through His ascension.

V.2 Verse 2, He pleads concerning the mission God had sent Him on. The origin of His power, thou has given me power. He had it because He had been elected especially and sent down from Heaven to work among men.

He prays concerning the extent of this power. Why He says it is power over all flesh, over all mankind, over the world of spirit. He has power over the upper and the unseen world which will be subject and he will be able to subdue these. All mankind then has come short of the glory of God. That by giving to them eternal life, He would glorify the Father who has given unto Him. Now, mankind had been considered corrupt and fallen face to face with judgment. Now he has the power to come and to change all of this.

V.3 Verse 3, He comes to the great power -- purpose rather of this mission. The purpose for eternal life. The purpose for them knowing God. He said that He was going to give eternal life and this was a blessedness. God is here calling the only true God to distinguish Him from the false Gods. That He is not a counterfeit, but that Jesus Christ now is the mediator between God and man and the one who is able to bring life. As a man was once asked by a person of intelligence, show me your God. And so he invited the man to come on the outside into the daylight. He invited him then to look into the sun full in the face. Well, he could not. Because of the brightness of it. And then he went on to say, this is one of God's ambassadors. And he said no man has seen God at any time. And when a man is aged and God bestows eternal life upon him, there comes the knowledge of God as the only true God.

Napoleon at one time on a ship, his officers were talking about the existence of God. He pointed to the Heavens where the stars were shining and said, "All very well gentlemen, but who created these."

You remember Nicodemus had pointed out to him by Jesus that a man needed to be born of the spirit. Before he could even see the kingdom of God. The man in his natural surroundings is unable to see these wonderful things.

And he is unable to understand the knowledge of God. But he will be delivered from the false God's and this is the mission of Jesus, to reveal the true God.

V.4 In Verse 4, He prays that even good men when they approach the close of life and take a look at the past they are constrained to feel that they have failed and realize that their own ideals have not been satisfied. And they worry over their neglect. But Christ alone looks back over His past life without any reproach. There was comfort in it because He said I glorified thee and I have finished my work. Now he does not complain of the disgrace, he does not complain of the sorrow, the hardships, but he says the work which has been given to me has been finished, and is about to receive the last stroke. It is recorded for an example to all. We must aim at the glory of God in all. We must glorify God on earth as His children. We must persevere until the end of our days, until the time we can sit down and say, it is finished. Because Jesus stands at the goal of His earthly court, He has accomplished His life's work, on earth completely finished to the limit of His mission. Having accomplished this on the cross, He said, it is finished. These are wonderful words to every sinner. It speaks peace concerning the sealing grace of Jesus.

V.5 In Verse 5, He talks about the state of glory He had

He does not pray that they might carry on a great reformation. But he prays that they might be kept from sin. And they might be furnished with strength to be faithful until they are called to Heaven. And Jesus is praying about the prosperity of the soul. And how little interest and concern some Christians give to this matter.

The request itself, keep them from the world. Now there are two ways of being delivered from the world. One way would be for them to be taken out of the world. Now Jesus is not praying for them to be removed out of the world. He could have prayed that they might be removed by death, or be taken away by fire, or lifted up into Heaven to join Job and the rest of them. I think there are two or three reasons why He did not pray this. One, would be because He came to conquer. He did not come to countenance what was taking place. And second, He came into the world because he had work for them to do in the world. The world was sick. The world was in darkness. The world needed the good people. And if you take the good people out of the world, then what? Then where? And Jesus was not praying that this would come to pass. He does not pray that they be exempt even from the total troubles of the world. He does not pray that they be taken away from the toils, the terrors, that they will have any easy life. That they will be safe all the time.

that believed on Him later. And this night of prayer when He comes is very encouraging.

V.6 In Verse 6, they have proved their loyalty and faithfulness to their high calling. They have kept the faith. Now this word which the apostle has kept was Christ's revelation of the Father, hence, the Son has described it as thy word. To keep this word means to store it up in the memory, to obey it, and to fulfill it, to keep it in the heart, in order to impart it unto others that they might come to know God whose has revealed Himself as Father through the Son. They had persistently believed in Christ, accepted His word, and this is what Jesus is speaking of here in this verse. And it was and still is only such men who can receive the revelation of the Father. Only those who receive this Son in such, the disclosure will understand the truth about Christ. So today not all who hear the good news respond. Not that the disciples fully understood the words of Jesus, they were dull at heart, they were a little bit slow and yet, He speaks to them and He charges them that He had received they were. And the disciples, the pupils became learners, those who witnessed, publishers of the gospel.

"I hear you asked the Lord for a good garden," I said to the gardener. "I did," he answered, "but I never pray without my hoe in my hand." "Why is that?" "Well, I believe the Lord and I have got to work together. He sends the sunshine and the rain, and I promise to keep down the weeds."

For in Verse 9 we will discover a high priest, like Aaron, likewise was given to minister in his age and he had authority that had been given him. Thine they were, he did not give that which was not his own. But he gave those that belonged to him. And those that were the flock, as the

Warmth of Prayer

Mr. Spurgeon was one day showing some visitors through the Tabernacle. After taking them to the main part of the building he said "Come and I'll show you the heating apparatus." Not caring to see that they would have declined, but out of courtesy they consented. Imagine their surprise when he took them to a room where four hundred were gathered in a prayer meeting. His figure of speech was well chosen. The church with warmth of spirit must have the warmth-producing prayer meeting.

nts of the teacher to take with em. They received nks in the rain. they obeyed it.

Verse 7 & 8, they received the revelation of God. They have understood the word. They are aware of what it offers. The great importance of it -- this is the thing we need today. They have known surely that I came out of God. We see here what it is to believe. It is to know with certainty the truth of the Son of God to be convinced and to believe it and to walk in it.

We see what it is, that we are to believe that Jesus Christ came from God. That he is the Son of God, that he is God, and Jesus seems to enlarge upon this in His prayer.

In Verse 9, and 10, he pleads the Father's own interest in them. I pray for them that they are thine. They are thine and they are mine, he says. I pray for them.

For they belong to Thee. In all that have received Christ, all that have believed have this relationship with Him. And here they are down here in this world and I am not praying for the world Jesus said. But I am praying for these disciples that are down here in the world. And here is a distinction between the church and the world. And here is a distinction between Christ's prayer too because he is praying exclusively for these and the main results of His ministry.

Now He gives two or three reasons here why He prays for these disciples. First, because they are thine. They belong to the Father. And it is the Father's responsibility to keep them. Second, I am glorified in them. The word implies that Christ's honor and His success is bound up in the security of these. In the third place, He says I am no more in the world -- that is, they are left along in the world and they are going to be hated. And I am their representative and I am just committing them to the Father in Verse 11.

Now the request made here is a general plea. Christ, we must take note, is relating all this to spiritual blessings and Heavenly things. He does not pray that they might be rich. He does not pray that they might be great in the world. He does not pray that they might gain great estates.

cross. This is a high privilege given to a church member that in the world you cannot see Jesus but you can see Him through professing members. And you can see Christ, it means that you can see Jesus in those that follow Him. Ye are the body of Christ. Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. And certainly this is a high and a holy privilege, to be a part of one of the greatest movements in this world.

It is a high privilege for Christians to uphold the Christian principles of church membership. I think that Christians certainly are duty bound to uphold these. There are always questions people ask, will you tell me certain things are wrong and certain things are right. If they are wrong, why are they wrong. Yes, we know there are examples, such as sin. That certainly takes away joy. But Jesus said by their fruits ye shall know them. Do they bring good or do they bring bad. Could you ask your Saviour to bless the things that you take part in. Or would you hesitate, or would you doubt.

It is certainly a privilege for us to endure for Jesus. In these days when there is so much conflict and trials in this world. Worldliness in the church, worldliness in church members, and certainly Jesus is praying for these disciples.

Here is a privilege of giving, an opportunity to give.

What honor it is for a Christian soldier of faith to be left here to overcome the world. And then some Christians want to go into hiding, into a monastery and retreat from the world. Shut himself up and separate himself away from the world. What is it that a man could do, get into a cell and shut himself off from the world.

Now another way Jesus might have prayed that they might be delivered from the world — that is, that they might be kept from the corruption that is in the world, that they might follow the Father's mercies. Holy Father keep those whom thou has given me. Christ was now leaving them and he was thinking about their defense after His departure. And this ought to be great comfort to the believer tonight. That Christ has committed you to the care of the Father by faith. He keeps your soul to God. Keeping your lives until they have done their work, keep their comfort, let them not be broken into by the hardships. We need to pause here to say that only the Holy Father who is in Heaven can certainly care for us and give us an abundant entrance into Heaven. He has put His divine institution down here for us to be strengthened through. Young people need to hear this prayer. That they might be kept from evil in this day when we find so much sin and so much shame, among so many of our youth. The

vile literature, the let down, the moral decay. There are so many reasons why Jesus prayed that they might be preserved.

V. 12 Verse 12, he pleads that hitherto he had kept them. While I was with them, he says, I faithfully discharged my undertakings. While I was with them, the matter of being kept by Christ implies that these disciples were weak. They could not keep themselves. And it is very much like we are tonight, we have to depend upon Him to keep us, to strengthen us. The Devil seems to be strong.

He pleads that He was now under the necessity of leaving. And he wants them to be watched over, cared for.

V. 13 In Verse 13, He pleads the satisfaction that it would be to them if they should know that they will be filled with joy. He was leaving them in tears and in trouble.

V. 14 In Verse 14, He pleads the danger of the world. Those that would destroy. And He has given the word, the world will hate you.

V. 15 And In Verse 15, He talks about getting assistance to them as they pass through the word.

V. 16 And in Verse 16, He pleads that they might not conform to the world but to Him. And this is a new dimension here.

In Christ Satan could not get a foot hold. For He found nothing sinful in Him. But in the disciples there was some-

thing, their nature enabled him to work. And these disciples needed to be kept and protected. Now in the world and not of the world. They were not to be part of the world. And yet today we find that there are Christians who are worldly and who are definitely a part of the world. As Jesus commits these to the Father, is one of the greatest parts of this prayer. If we could only somehow think about the great high privilege we have of church membership. The obligation which is one that is vital and significant. It is like a camp fire you get away from it you lose the warmth of it. And when you are close to it, you feel the power of it. The first gospel sermon recorded tells us about a man who preached and 3,000 souls professed conversion. They were at once added unto the church. Dr. Torey once said I would rather belong to the most imperfect Christian church I ever knew than not belong to any church at all. If it is on wrong lines then it is our duty to pray that God will set it right. The church at Corinth had its terrible failings and we find that there were some who were expelled from the membership, who refused to live a Christian life. Young Christians who join the church and need the church, need to be faithful in the attendance of the services, they need to get involved in the organizations of the church. Your place is in the regiment of the army and it is under the



### III. Continuing Request - Verse 20-23.

Here is a prayer in Verse 20 concerning conversion.

I am not praying for these alone He says, but he says which shall believe. He seems here to be dealing with the necessity of conversion of those that are still in the world. It is through the word that souls are brought to believe in Jesus. And how one is to get rid of his sins and be forgiven -- it is not through the church or the creed or some other person. But it is through the word of God, that this takes place. And Jesus here intercedes, not on behalf of the great, but for the weak and for those who had little. The good shepherd has an eye for every one of these prayer was filed in Heaven, these eleven disciples were. And through their work they and others were to be saved and that there might be believers and a continuing request.

Verse 21, that they may be all be one. This is the desire that they might be united in believe in Christ. As they gathered in church. It is not for confer

#### When Prayer Is Neglected

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath," as James Montgomery wrote in his well-known hymn. When a Christian neglects it, his life and work soon show the effects. The story of the musician who did not practice has often been told, and perhaps about several different musicians. But evidently Paderewski, the great pianist who died last summer, was the one who made the famous remark. Time (July 7) in a sketch of his life, quoted the following interesting paragraph: "Said Paderewski: 'When I miss practice one day, I know it; when I miss two days, my wife knows it; when I miss three days, the

public knows it.' When Paderewski practiced, he had no peer, and only the late, mighty Liszt and Rubinstein ever equaled him at a piano." If the word "prayer" is substituted for "practice" a Christian could say the same thing. These are days not only of fierce conflict among the nations, but, sad to say, of sharp division and disagreement among Christians. It was never more important that we who are God's people should maintain, by His grace, the daily habit of personal Bible study and prayer.

and committees, it is

Share your income and be systematic in giving to your church. It is a privilege to come to the Lord's table, in remembrance of Him. Every man is to search his own heart. It is a privilege for you to serve, to be faithful. To do what you can, to build His kingdom. It is a privilege for you to worship. All families ought to worship together. Regularly on the Lord's day. Oh my, how people would love to worship, some people, but they can't. But others just ignore the privilege. It is your privilege to grow as a Christian. It is your opportunity to develop as a Church Member, and as a Christian. Robert E. Lee said that beauty is the sublimest word in the English language. You can not turn back on your duty. Because it is your duty to grow as a Christian, to spend time in prayer, it is your privilege of repentance and encouragement to others.

In Verse 17, He prays that they might be sanctified through the truth. Now this deals with your personal holiness. This is that you are consecrated, set apart person or thing to God.

This means also that there must be spiritual endowment -- that you are equipped for service. You are set apart, commissioned, and represent Christ. The temple was sanctified and set apart. It was dedicated for this purpose of religious service. That is the idea here in John 17:7.

V.18 In Verse 18, it means that you are set apart for service. That you need the same equipment as He had for His special mission. And thou has sent me into the world even so, have I also sent them into the world. This is certainly a great statement on identification.

You have listened in on the radio and you hear every once in awhile some program that will break in and say this is station identification. By law they have to do this on a broadcast and a station has call letters. And this is certainly something that is needed. Now Jesus here is giving station identification. He is identifying these disciples as His. There is human need that is identified. And He wanted these to be identified with Him that grace was real and that they would come to this helping power. And certainly we need to feel our difficulties and also to see the possibilities which we have. That we might be delivered through these. Micah he has showed the of a man what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Jesus is praying for these disciples and identifying them that they might have this extra power. That God's people might know where they stand. And His motive is genuine. This is the love of our Lord. Now we know if you are a stranger in a bank, you have to use some identification.

You go into a department store to pick up a package, you must have an identification slip. You go to the dry cleaners you have to have an identification number. And certainly the same thing is true in the Bible. Moses said what am I going to say -- who sent me. And God said to tell them that I am sent you.

Jonah who was asleep on the ship had to identify himself in the midst of trouble. Paul on the road, said who art thou, the voice said -- I am Jesus. On the Emmaus Road the two disciples were grateful when they recognized the Master. This is the same way in which Jesus here identifies these disciples. That he said that they belong to Him. And that they were sanctified for His sake. And that they belonged to him. They were sanctified in the sense that they were equipped for service. And that makes Verse 17 more meaningful and Verse 19 easier to understand. Christ consecrated himself for a mission and now he consecrates his disciples for a mission. And he asks the Father to sanctify the disciples for their mission. The first makes possible the second.

To know some good Christian prays for us is good to know.

To know Christ intercedes for us, how can we resist him further.

24  
of the church, that will participate in the ages that are to come. The preserving, the sanctifying, the uniting, glorification inimates here an authority to intercede as king, as priest. It is His authority that they might come and be with Him in glory, and in Heaven. And Jesus prays for us that the church might be re-united with Him in Heaven. It is upon this blessed relationship that Christ places His final request in this prayer.

That they may also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am. This is the grand purpose of it all. Indeed this is something that we can contemplate, the glory of the Father, which He has prepared for us. The word behold means that by faith, by actual beholding. What it will mean actually is to share Christ's glory. And we shall all reign with Him. We shall see Him as He is and we shall be like Him. Now the words where I am means to be with Christ in glory. We know that today the church is imperfect, there may be some divisions, but Jesus plans to present this to the Father. It will be a happy place. The lamb is the life of the new Jerusalem. As Job said, I shall see God in my flesh. Upon this ground of believing in Christ, we have this hope.

25  
In Verse 25, the title he gives to God, Oh Righteous Father. The character He gives of the world that lay in

21  
not through discussions or exchange of views but these are the effects if not the cause of union. The cause of oneness, the cause of union with the Father is through the Son. It is through salvation, basic for a spiritual union, for which Christ is praying here. This is a normal situation. It is union between the Father and the Son. It is a natural ground for the church in its oneness. I in them and thou in me. Now obviously Jesus is praying about something that transcends all the unity talk that we hear today, in this world. It finds its parts in the Father and in the Son. It is a oneness of purpose and the thing that unites the church. That is, it is a unity in one master, one mission, one message, one Jesus, one heart, one mouth speaking the same thing in Christ. It is the unity, the strength that is embodied here that this might go to the end of the earth.

It is the movement of ones spirit, this is plainly applied in I Corinthians 6:17, we are knit together in one charity, one judgment.

We are knit together in a new heart, every true Christian has the eyes of God upon Him and works to the glory of God. They are all one in desire and in prayer. They are of love and affection.

And some live in the past, some will live in the future. Now this does not hinder the unity, that Jesus is

praying for. It is not space, not time, not place, but he is praying not about a physical union, a mental union, or a social union but he is praying about the perfect kind of unity. Now there are several arguments enforced in this petition.

This oneness that is going to follow is between the Father and the Son and it is mentioned again and again.

The Father and the Son are one. Father. And this is the pattern is a strict and closed union. divine grace and counsel of God.

Another thing, this holy It is made complete through Him

In Verse 21, it is that thou did ascend me. This one is not a disunity.

The design of Christ in a for these disciples. That of p believers.

In Verse 22, He says, the glory that has been given me I give unto them. Christ refers to what He has done to make this union possible.

In Verse 23, He says their oneness might have a happy influence upon others and the furtherance of the gospel.

#### PRAYER AND CRITICISM

Two Christian men once "fell out." One heard that the other was talking against him, and he went to him and said:

"Will you be kind enough to tell me my faults to my face, that I may profit by your Christian candor and try to get rid of them?"

"Yes, sir," replied the other. "I will do it."

They went aside, and the former said: "Before you commence telling what you think wrong in me, will you please bow down with me, and let us pray over it, that my eyes may be opened to see my faults as you will tell them? You lead in prayer."

It was done; and when the prayer was over the man who had sought the interview said: "Now proceed with what you have to complain of in me."

But the other replied: "After praying over it, it looks so little that it is not worth talking about. The truth is, I feel now that if I going around talking against you I have been serving the devil himself, and I have need that you pray for me and forgive me the wrong I have done you."—Selected.

That the world, He says, might know this. And no stone is to be left unturned about convicting the world of its need. It will recommend Christianity to the world. And Jesus is praying that their preaching, their serving, and they will go out to see that God is with you. The united Christians in love and charity is a thing of beauty. Now when Christians instead of this cause quarrels among themselves and itself, and other strife, then certainly this is not going to convict and convince the world. We must get rid of these unkindnesses. Christ gives His glory to the church, that she may be perfected as one. And it implies that they might be kept on knowing that the Father loves the world. John 3:16. And the proof of this will be that Christians love each other. And they are one in Christ. That this is a condemnation, I think of Christian people tonight.

The Christians need to base all their fellowship on that. We need this fellowship. Where in the world can we find such fellowship as we find among God's true children. You can walk into the midst of the humble people, where they are singing, praying, testifying. And you can add your simple words to the story of Jesus.

#### IV. Companionship In Glory - Verse 24-26.

Verse 24, we come to the ultimate vision of the glory

## Prayer Preserved

25

### The "Good Shepherd"

Captain P. R. Helander, 25, of Chicago, confidently said: "The hand of God guided the Good Shepherd, a B-24 bomber, on its 21 missions over Germany and occupied Europe."

Captain Helander enlisted in the Air Force in May 1941. He wears the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart.

"Each time the bomber prepared to take off from its base in England, the crew knelt in prayer, and at the mission's conclusion, thanks were given for safe delivery," said Captain Helander, pilot of the Good Shepherd and leader of his squadron.

Upon the bomber's nose, crew members had painted the opening lines of the 23rd Psalm: "The Lord is my Shepherd. He leadeth me."

Once, high over Berlin in flak-studded skies, the Good Shepherd received a direct hit, but quickly regained its position in the squadron, although Captain Helander, suffered face and body wounds which hospitalized him for three weeks.

"Only by the grace of God did we come through that fight and others equally as bad," said the captain.

"Often the skies were darkened with enemy flak and the plane was tossed about like a cork on the ocean, but we aboard the Good Shepherd held firm to our belief that nothing made by man could down us."

"Many flyers eagerly sought assignment to the Good Shepherd, for word got around that it led a charmed life," said the captain.

"Our constant prayers, I informed them, were responsible for whatever charm we possessed."

During his last week in England before returning to Chicago on a 30-day leave, Captain Helander watched as the Good Shepherd and a new crew took off on its 22nd bombing mission.

Hours later over Munich, Germany, the bomber was shot down. No information concerning the crew's safety has ever been received, he said.

The captain commented: "The new crew said no prayers, but just piled into the plane and took off."

The Lord Jesus said: "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." (John 10:11)

The language of Psalm 23 is so intensely personal that only a genuine believer in the death and resurrection of the Savior can repeat it in faith, with the spirit and the understanding.

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