Matthew 26:36-46 part 2

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 11 January 2026

Preacher: Ray Kelly

[0:00] I don't know whether it's occurred to you that it doesn't take three hours to say, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Now, one could extend it a bit because it says he was in a great anguish. He had to have an angel sent to him to strengthen him.

So there was a lot going on and he might have repeated himself a few times and so on. But three hours of prayer, there must, I would have thought, been other prayers going on. And so if you turn now to John 17 and as we go through this, I want us to keep in mind that in Ephesians 5 verse 1, it says we should be imitators of God.
So what I'm looking for in John 17 is whether there are things here that we can legitimately copy, imitate.
Before we read it, just something of interest, just to place this. Why do I think this was prayed at the same time as those other three prayers?
And I don't know why Matthew, Mark and Luke didn't record it. And then John did record it, but he didn't record it until quite a long time later. The first disciples recorded all this in about 50-ish, 50-60-ish AD.
[1:23] John didn't write his stuff until 96 AD. So there's quite a big gap here. Why did John pick it out? And hopefully we can partially answer that. But if you look at the last verse of chapter 16, and what you have in chapters 13, 14, 15 and 16 is what's called the upper room discourse, where Jesus is talking to his disciples.

And he finishes off, he says, these things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world.
So there's a kind of an end there to whatever he was saying to his disciples. And you can read all that at your leisure. It's when he promised to send the Holy Spirit and where he promised that the Holy Spirit would educate them and would lead them into all truth and sustain them.
But he comes to an end of that. And then in verse 17, it says, Jesus spoke these things and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said. And then we get a prayer that he prayed, the longest prayer that he's recorded to have prayed.
So he's come to the end of this upper room discourse. So this is either immediately before he goes into the garden or it's coincidentally at the same time as he goes into the garden.
[2:43] In any event, it's around the same time. And if you just flick over to chapter 18 and verse 1, it says, when Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden in which he entered with his disciples.

So there is his entry into the garden of Gethsemane. Now, because of a quirk in the language, we're not sure whether all this happened just before he entered the garden or as he entered the garden or on his way to the garden.
But to be honest, I'm not really bothered about the semantics of that. The point is that during this time, after he finished the upper room discourse, and before he shed his blood in the garden, he was praying all through that time.
And being as we're supposed to be imitators of him, then we should look at this prayer, which was made just literally just before he went to the cross.
After this prayer, he had the shedding of his own blood through sweating drops of blood in the garden. And he was then arrested and taken for trial and crucifixion. So what was on his heart at the point where he was facing a most agonizing and brutal death on our behalf?
[4:01] And so he says this, and I'm going to break this into three sections, which naturally occur in the text. Father, the hour has come.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

Glorify your son that the son may glorify you. Even as you gave him authority over all flesh, that to all whom you have given him, he may give eternal life.
This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on the earth, having accomplished the work which you have given me to do.
Now, Father, glorify me together with yourself, with the glory which I had with you before the world was. So this first section, the first five verses, is devoted to Jesus praying for himself.
But what we can note here is, see, when I pray for myself, all too often it's in a panic. All too often it's because I am lacking something.
[5:05] All too often it's because I need help with something. It's a prayer for me in an utterly selfish way. Right? Lord, help! I want to get through this! Or something like that.

But this wasn't that. He said, glorify me so that I can glorify you. And in that sense it was utterly selfless. So is it legitimate for us to say, Lord, glorify me?
Well, it depends, doesn't it? Lord, glorify me. Because I like the adulation and the crowds. But that would not be legitimate. No. But glorify me so that I can glorify you.
Kind of means, Lord, help me, empower me to succeed in everything you have given me to do.
Now, I would say that is a legitimate prayer and one we should copy.
Because what it means is we are committing ourselves to the Lord to do whatever he asks us to do. Lord, empower me.
[6:10] Lord, glorify me. I want people to come and tell me I'm absolutely glorious only because in doing that they are glorifying the Lord Jesus. I don't want anybody to think highly of Ray.

I want people to think highly of what God has done in Ray. So I think this is a legitimate prayer that we can emulate. And obviously it can be misused and it can be taken into pride.
And you see it happen. Unfortunately, there's a lot of churches where the so-called minister gets up and sticks his chest out and says, I've got the anointing.
I'm the anointed one. There are people who even have the audacity to say, you can only get what you need from me. Now, that's not what's meant here. What's meant here is.
I guess this isn't part of the notes, but it's just occurred to me what John the Baptist said. Now, John the Baptist was he was heralded as the greatest prophet that ever lived.
[7:11] And what he said was. Lord, you must increase and I must decrease. But then this prayer doesn't finish with that, does it? Or this section of the prayer doesn't finish with that.

It says, Is that a legitimate thing for us to pray?
Now, here's a potential seat of heresy if ever there was one. But what we know is that the Bible describes Christ as slain before the foundation of the world.
So if I'm to glorify him firstly, then he must glorify me. In my old sinful flesh, I can't do it anyway. So he must glorify me if I'm to glorify him.
And then, did I have any glory with him before the world was? That I can say, Lord, I want to go back to sharing the glory that I had with you from before the world was.
[8:21] Did I ever have that? We read not long ago in Psalm 139. That in verses 15 and 16, it tells us that our days were already formed in God's book before any of them had taken place.

Now, if I stray into the realms here where you want to start throwing tomatoes at me, I'll understand that. But we were in the heart and mind of God before the world was.
He knew everything about me before any single day of my life had ever taken place. Before I was conceived. Before my mum met my dad. Before they were conceived.
In fact, he knew that somehow I was in the loins of Adam. And that at some point I would emerge.
And in that sense alone, I always had a place in glory with him.
Because he always knew me. And so is it then a legitimate thing for me to say, I want that place in glory with you. I want to be with you now, like I was with you when I was in the loins of Adam.
[9:39] Or even before that, before I was in the loins of Adam. When I was just somewhere in your heart and imagination. Which was untainted.

There was no sin. There was no barrier. There was nothing to get in between us. And in that respect. And I say this only because we don't tend to have this perspective.
That our relationship with God that we've experienced in this lifetime. Is only part of a vast picture.
Am I making sense?
Nobody's got their tomatoes at the ready. It's. It kind of blows my mind this. Because it means that what Jesus is saying is.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

Glorify me with yourself. Like we had before the world began. And it then occurred to me. This is a legitimate thing for us to pray. Because what you're praying is.
[10:36] Lord keep me steadfast. Keep me in line. Keep me from error. Keep me from falling. So that I can return. At some point I was in your heart.

And in your mind. And you loved what you saw. And yet. It was yet future. And I want to get back to that.
And I was very touched by that. Now it's. It's probably something you should only pray. If you have the revelation that goes with it. That you do have this.
You always had a place in God's heart. Now in. In 2 Corinthians 3 verse 18. It says he transforms us from glory into glory.
Glory. So. It would seem to me. That our glory. Which is still in its early stages. Because it won't be completed.
[11:33] Until we enter heaven. Receive our resurrection bodies. And enter that. Confirmed in that state of sinlessness. So it's still. We're still on that path.

But it would seem. That our glory. Has been present in the heart of God. Since before the foundation of the world. So then he moves on.
To pray about the disciples. That are with him. And so we need to go to verse 6. And he says. I have manifested your name. To the men whom you gave me.
Out of the world. They were yours. You gave them to me. And they have kept your word. Now they have come to know. That everything you have given me. Is from you. For the words which you gave me.
I have given to them. And they received them. And truly understood. That I came forth from you. And they believed. That you sent me. I ask on their behalf.
[12:30] I do not ask on behalf of the world. But of those whom you have given me. For they are yours. And all things that are mine are yours. And yours are mine.

And I have been glorified in them. I am no longer in the world. And yet they themselves are in the world. And I come to you.
Holy Father. Keep them in your name. The name which you have given me. That they may be one. Even as we are one. While I was with them.
I was keeping them in your name. Which you have given me. And I guarded them. And not one of them perished. But the son of perdition. Judas.
For those of you that wonder what that is. None of them perished. But the son of perdition. So that the scripture. Would be fulfilled. But now. I come to you.
[13:24] And these things I speak in the world. So that they may have my joy. Made full in themselves. I have given them your word. And the world has hated them. Because they are not of the world.

Even as I am not. Of the world. I do not ask you to take them out of the world. But to keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world. Even as I am not of the world.
Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world. I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes.
I sanctify myself. That they themselves. Also may be sanctified in truth. So up to verse 19. He starts by saying to the father.
As part of his prayer. I have manifested your name to them. To the ones you have given me. So the indication is.
[14:26] That the disciples of Jesus. And I am going to stay on this. Because in the last part of this chapter. What we read. Is that Jesus prays the same. He extends this prayer to us.

So whatever he has just prayed. For these disciples. He extends that to apply to us. We will see that in a moment. But firstly he says. You have given me these people. And I have manifested your name to them.
And the word manifested means. Shown or made known. I have made known your name. So. As Jesus prays this. He knows in his heart.
That he has revealed the father. To his disciples. In other words. He's done his job. And that's a. Grossly underestimates it.
But that's what it means. You know. You gave them to me. And I've done everything. To make sure they know who you are. What you're about. That they understand you. So.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

[15:26] I think we're in a strong position. To pray for those. To whom we have revealed God. Those to whom. We have made God known. When we share our testimony.

And somebody expresses an interest. And we make the name of God known. And so on the same basis. That he carries on and prays. For those to whom he's made. God known.
We can also pray for people. To whom we've made. The name of God known. Now in verses six to eight. He seems to.
Describe what it is to be a believer. A true disciple. And so the question is. Does this describe us? He says. I've manifested your name to the men. Who you gave me out of the world.
They were yours. And you gave them to me. I wonder if we have that sense. I know sometimes I do. But then there are other times. When I probably miss it. That sense that when someone comes across our path.
[16:25] And we share the gospel with them. And develop a friendship. And a relationship with them. And finish up discipling them. That they've been given to us. I mean.

Just to use a fairly recent example. Sorry for picking on you. But when Marie came along to Christianity Explored. I believe she was given to us.
At that point. She became a gift to us. Not that we can be proud of. But that we can just rejoice. And thank God for the gift he has given us.
And therefore we then need to be praying for her. To become a true disciple. So for us to be true disciples. We need to be praying for those God has given us.
To also become true disciples. And he says those who were given to him. Out of the world he has kept. He's guarded and protected them from harm.
[17:25] Those who were given to him out of the world. The Bible describes us as. Not as being in the world. But not of the world. And just to clear up a little niggle.

That comes sometimes in criticism of this passage of scripture. The fact that he says. That they've been given to him. And he hasn't lost any of them. And he's obviously praying that their destiny will be fulfilled.
But it doesn't mean they had to walk perfectly. It simply means that they have to persist. And follow him. The process of discipleship is a lifelong thing.
And finishes when you pass through the gates of death. So. This is not saying that they carried out the word perfectly. But what it does say is that they treasured the word.
And it says really that they sought to carry it out. To the best of their ability. He says that they were people who understood everything about him.
[18:27] Or everything important about him anyway. So they knew that everything he said and did came from God. So what he's doing here is he's earmarking those who've received and understood the words that Jesus has given them.

As his true disciples. Not those who've necessarily been to college. Got a doctorate. Not that those people are banished from this by the way. But the fact that you've been to theological college doesn't make you a true disciple.
Doesn't mean you fully understand these things. The fact that you've got a doctorate doesn't mean you fully understand these things. Jesus strangely went to no university at all. It doesn't mean someone who's got worldly fame or is just influential.
But those who have received and understood his word. Now of course at the time that this was prayed. His word was all spoken.
There wasn't any of it written down yet. But he's not left us bereft of his word. And we have his word. So what he's doing here is he's praying for those who get around the outside of this word.
[19:46] In Jeremiah 31 verse 31 there's a passage there that talks about that the Lord will make a new covenant with his people. And will take the word and write it on their hearts.

So this I believe refers to people who have the word written on their hearts. And how does that happen? Well because you stay in it. And you're a bit like a terrier.
You won't put it down until you've solved something. Or you won't put it down until you've understood something. It becomes not just a peripheral thing that some boring preacher puts you through an hour of agony every Sunday morning.
But it becomes a part of your life where it all becomes relevant to every day to every decision. And what you then find is that God responds to your enthusiasm and starts to bless you when you least expect it.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

And I'm not in any way trying to put myself on any pedestal here because this is entirely God. But I find that when I wake up in the morning he is the first thing in my mind.
[20:51] He's the first thing on my heart. And usually the last thing on my thoughts when I go to sleep. And the day is punctuated with him through his word.

It's the continued diligence in the word that keeps him in your heart and soul and makes him central to your life. Now I think I touched on this last time.
There are many people who say I just can't do it. I can't study the Bible. That's okay. You don't have to on your own. Right. If you struggle ask for help. And there are all sorts of, particularly nowadays, there are all sorts of gadgets and gizmos you can get that will feed you the word of God while you're doing the washing up or cleaning the car or doing the garden or whatever.
But you can also ask. God has surrounded you with people who love you and who will take you aside with the word and explain anything to you. He's covered any areas that you might struggle.
But look at verse 9. And this is to some extent quite terrifying. I ask on their behalf. I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those you have given me, for they are yours.
[22:10] It specifically says he's not praying for those who are not his. Now, there are other scriptures that give an indication of this.

One is John 3, 18, which says, if you believe, you are not condemned. And if you do not believe, you are already condemned. To those who express no interest, are not bothered, who can't be bothered, he's not praying for them.
Now, given that he is in heaven interceding with us, that is his current ministry. When he left this earth at the ascension, he went to be the propitiation for our sins.
The propitiation is the one who satisfies the wrath of God. And he does it through intercessory prayer. And he's praying for us.
Right now, right this minute. And if I'm not interested, he's not praying for me. Now, that is profound and worrying.
[23:26] Because it means that all the people with whom we share the gospel who go, no, no, no, I've got time for that, mate. Jesus isn't interceding for them. But then the question is, should we be interceding for them?

Don't know the answer to that one. Because there's something in our hearts that wants to pray them through and wants to keep praying for them until they tumble into the kingdom, hopefully. Or not, as the case may be.
But there is room for thinking that when somebody has said, no, not interested, don't bother me with it again. There's room for thinking that we stop praying for them at that point.
Now, I don't feel comfortable saying that. But Jesus wasn't praying for them. And I don't quite know what to do with that. There's a part of my humanity that thinks, oh, Lord, bring him through.
But Jesus, you see, he has a quality that I don't have. He can see into men's hearts and he knows when somebody's going to come through or not. Whereas I can't see that. So I have to assume that there's always a chance.
[24:28] So I'm not going to advocate stopping praying for people. But it's interesting that we should have to ponder that, isn't it? That it's not an automatic thing.

That God is interceding for everybody in heaven. Because it says quite clearly he's not. He's not interceding for those who have said no. In verse 10, it says, And all these things that are mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them.
What this says is that Jesus is glorified for the fruit he has borne with his disciples. He's glorified because they're glorified.
He's done the job that the Lord sent him to do. Now, can we claim that for ourselves? Can we pray? Lord, glorify us because I glorified them. Well, I think yes. The Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy, if you read the passage where he's looking forward to his own death, and he says, I fought the good fight.
[25:51] I've kept the course. And I'm going to receive a crown of righteousness when I get to heaven. So, in a sense, he was accepting that he would be glorified because he had done what he was sent to do.

Now, I don't know about the degrees of glory here, but I do know that in every respect that we've done something in obedience to the Lord while we walk this life, he will reward us.
There are legitimate rewards for us in heaven. Crowned to throw at the feet of Jesus, perhaps. And then, for the sake of time, I'm just going to move to the end of this section, which then he says, if

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

you go back to verse 20, So, verse 19, For their sakes, I sanctify myself, that they themselves may also be sanctified in truth.
So, he's praying that all of them will remain in this state of sanctification. And going back to verse 21, which we haven't read yet, but he says this.
He's praying that they may all be one, even as you, Father, and me, even as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you sent me.
[27:29] So, what he's praying for, in addition to all of this, is that there will be unity between them. Not just any old unity, not pretend unity, which is, well, I know you're a Muslim, but I can be united with you.

Sorry, no, you can't. You believe diametrically opposed things. You can't have true unity like that. You know, my Hindu brothers and sisters. No, they're not my brothers and sisters.
While they're Hindus, they're among those that Jesus is not praying for. Harsh but true. Doesn't mean I can't pray for them to get saved.
But until they're saved, they're not my brothers and sisters. And he's praying that the disciples, the people that have followed him, the people that are devoted, will find unity.
And unity, biblically, is a concept that we kind of struggle with in the West.
[28:29] In Hebrew, they would use the word echad. I'm not sure if the pronunciation is correct, but it looks like that's the way it should be said. And the concept echad is, it comes from the Shema, hero Israel.

The Lord, our God, is oneness. Echad, one, one or oneness. Now, we know that there is a trinity in the Godhead.
There's three persons in one Godhead. And yet they are considered to be one. Because you can't get a fag paper between them when it comes to what's in their heart and their spirit.
And that they are oneness. When you look at the Godhead, you're looking at a multiple expression of characters who are so united that you can't divide them.
So it means that when Jesus said, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father, it literally means that I am absolutely one with the Father.
[29:35] You can't divide us. And so for us to have that kind of unity, we have to be one. Now, in this room and with everybody in this room, I feel as if I'm beginning to know what that feels like.

Because you are a wonderful bunch of people and I find myself at one with you. But generally in society, this is not the case.
And even in churches, it is not the case. And so you have this false unity that I've already spoken of where people, you know, don't say that, you'll disturb the unity. If what you're going to say is going to disturb the unity, you haven't really got unity.
You've got some pretense that looks nice, you know. Be nice to the Muslims and the Hindus. I've got nothing against being nice to them. They are, unfortunately, wrong in biblical terms.
And I can't be united with them because I will always have to challenge their views. So where do we draw the line? Because even in this room, we're not going to be united on everything.
[30:45] And I know that my pre-millennial beliefs are not shared by everybody in the room. And yet we still remain united. So where does the line get drawn?

How do we draw a line that says you have to be rock solid united on this? The rest you can debate. There's a Latin phrase, and I'm not going to try and pronounce it in Latin because it looks very ominous.
But it means in essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity or love. So we identify the essentials and we need to be absolutely united on those things.
In fact, in 1 Corinthians 11, verses 15 to 22, it tells us that it's expected that there will be disagreements between us. And that there is even a purpose of God in those disagreements, which is so that those who are approved may become evident.
So when you all can't make your minds up on something, there should, hopefully, be someone in the church you can go to and say, we don't get this.
[31:54] Can you explain it to us? And the one who is approved will come to the fore. That doesn't put him on any pedestal, by the way. It just means that as a body, we need each other.

And it keeps the body functioning as a body rather than a bunch of individuals who are trying to put themselves on pedestals. So I take that passage to mean that typically those who are approved will restore unity or bring unity where there wasn't any before.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

And the Lord here, and by the way, this is the real Lord's Prayer. What's called the Lord's Prayer was actually a prayer for the disciples. It wasn't the Lord's Prayer at all. This is the Lord's Prayer. He prayed it.
But he's praying for unity. And if it was expressed in Hebrew, it would use the word echad. The word in Greek, I can't remember. But it's a bit like the English word for unity.
You could read it several ways. The word echad actually only has one interpretation. And that means that you are going to use a gesticulation.
[32:58] If you imagine pieces of clay being squished together like this and moulded and compressed until you can't separate them. That is the unity that is envisaged in this word echad.

Complete aside, it occurs to me that when a husband and a wife come together and a child is conceived, what you have is their oneness creating new life, which is a property that only God has, which I just think is a wonderful expression of what that oneness means.
The Bible says in Psalm 133, verse 1, Behold how good and how pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity. So when we pray for ourselves and each other, we should pray expecting God to unite us, to enable us to, as it says in Ephesians 4, verse 3, to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.
There's a uniting aspect to this. So the gospel that we preach, in Galatians 1, verse 8 and 9, it says, If someone gives you any other gospel other than the one written here, treat them as anathema, accursed, cast them aside.
There are these essentials that we must be united on. In the notes, I've put a hyperlink to a brief page.
[34:40] It's not designed to be an exhaustive thing, but it's just entitled, What are the core beliefs of Christianity? And it tells you the things that we have to be united on. But the last part of this, let's deal with it quickly, because I've just had a wave to say I'm running out of time fast.

First, from verse 20 onwards, it says, I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those who also believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, even as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me.
The glory which you've given to me, I have given to them, that they may be one just as we are one. This glory that he is imparting is for us, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that you sent me, and love them even as you have loved me.
Our unity as a body speaks to the world. It should be something they can't find anywhere else other than in God's body. It's something I have prayed for since I was first saved, and this is the first church where I've begun to find it, where people are united to the extent that I feel one with them. When they stub their toe, my foot hurts. It's kind of... But it's a bit like that, isn't it? There's a shared... It is as if we're all arms and legs and fingers and hands of the same body.
[36:15] There's a shared pain or a shared joy. And he finishes up by saying, Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory, which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world.

So we're back where we started from. I'll just finish the last two verses and then I'll comment. O righteous Father, although the world has not known you, yet I have known you, and these have known that you sent me, and I have made your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which you love me may be in them, and I in them.
The hallmark of us as the body of Christ is unity and love. And when we find ourselves at odds, we should work really hard to put that to rest.
And the most likely area where we are likely to fall down is doctrine, because I get up here and I talk, and every now and again one of you would go, I don't sound right, Ray. Now, typically what would then happen is I would say, and I don't do this, and I will never do this, but I would then say, well, you don't belong in this church if you don't agree with me.
I hope you will notice that that's not the approach we take. If somebody challenges me, I'm very happy to dig into the word until we resolve it, or if it's insoluble, which sometimes it is, you decide, is it an essential or a non-essential?
[37:58] If it's an essential, you deal with it, and you pursue it until it's dealt with. If it's a non-essential, then get on. And in any event, in all things, love, charity.

Father, thank you so much for this word, and I do hope I've done it justice. Your word is amazing. Father, I would ask that you lift our heads. The word says you are our glory and the lifter of our

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55

heads.
And I pray that when we pray, you will lift our heads and our understanding, and that you will enable us to reach high, much higher than maybe we've ever reached before.
And continually pray that you make us more Christ-like. Father, as we become more mature, the fire engine prayers that we often pray will become less and less.
And the prayers that we pray will be that, Lord, you would use us, and that, Lord, you would take us forward to this glorious day when we will be in your presence, and, like Paul, we'd be able to say, there is a crown laid up for us.
[39:14] Father, fire our imaginations in prayer, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 15:47:55