

Theme: Christians should pray and work to be unified and to see the Gospel spread so that the world might believe in Jesus.

I. Intro – Antony’s Speech in Julius Caesar

- A. Friends, Romans, Countrymen lend men your ears; I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him
- B. Famous speech where Antony seems to condemn Caesar and praise Brutus
- C. Refrain - “For Brutus is an honorable man”
- D. But as you pay attention you realize the opposite is true
- E. Jesus’ prayer needs to be read closely as well
- F. He says He is not praying for the world - but is very concerned for it!
- G. How do we pray for the world? How do we work for it?

II. Jesus, Christians, and the World (Review)

- A. Review - Jesus is praying for Christians - not the world
I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. John 17:9
- B. The world - a major theme in Jesus’ prayer!
 - 1. “World’ (cosmos) occurs 18 times in this prayer
 - 2. This is more than anything other than pronouns, articles, to be verb!
- C. The world is separated from God & hates believers
I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. John 17:14

- D. Amazingly - Jesus prays the world might believe!

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us **so that the world may believe that you have sent me.** ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity **to let the world know that you sent me** and have loved them even as you have loved me.
John 17:20–23

- E. Jesus prays for us - but keeps the world in view!

III. Why We Must Pray and Work For the World To Believe

- A. Because Jesus did! Pray like Jesus!

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John 17:20–23

- B. Because Jesus was sent into the world - and so are we!
As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. John 17:18
 - 1. God did not just abandon the world - He sent Jesus
 - 2. Jesus has not abandoned the world - He sends us!
 - 3. We can not simply avoid the world - sent into it

4. We must pray for the world to believe - and get into the world!

5. Christian ghetto mentality is disobedient!!!

C. Future believers are of the world right now - we must go!

I have revealed you to **those whom you gave me out of the world**. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. John 17:6

1. All believers are initially part of the world!

2. Those given to Jesus - 5 times in this prayer!

3. God knows Who they are - we do not!

4. We must go to serve, love and reach out to them

D. The only way they can believe is if we proclaim Jesus - & persuade effectively

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for **those who will believe in me through their message**, John 17:20

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. 2 Corinthians 5:11

1. They can not believe unless we proclaim Jesus to them

2. We are called to try and persuade

3. The Gospel is offensive to the world - we should not try to be so!

E. God loves people in the world - and so must we!

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

1. God so loved the world - do I love, or just judge?

2. God so loved He gave - do I give to reach the world - or just complain?

3. God gave His Son - do we offer Him to the world?

4. It is challenging to not condone sin, but still show love - but we must

5. This is being in the world but not of it

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I pray and work for the world to believe?

1. This purpose lays behind Christ's prayer for us

2. How often do I pray for specific unbelievers?

3. How often do I pray for revival and awakening?

4. Do I look for opportunities to share the Gospel with others?

5. Do I love people enough to pray for them and tell them about Jesus?

6. Don't complicate it - the Gospel is simple - Jesus lived for us, He died for us, He was raised for us - repent of sin and look to Him!

B. Praying for the world to believe

1. Think of a specific person or two - family, neighbor, coworker, friend

2. As I lead in prayer, pray for them specifically

Praying For the World To Believe

John 17:20-23

July 21, 2013

Prayer

Psalm 67:1-2

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine upon us, Selah 2 that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. Psalms 67:1–2

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. John 17:20–23

Pity the nations, O our God!
Constrain the earth to come;
Send Thy victorious Word abroad,
And bring the strangers home.
We long to see Thy churches full,
That all the chosen race
May with one voice, and heart and soul,
Sing Thy redeeming grace.
Isaac Watts - From "How Sweet and Aweful Is the Place"