

PRAYER: BATTLE PLAN

By Rev. Julia Schwert

“Prayer can accomplish what a willing God can accomplish.” You may wonder, is this a ‘plug’ for the Book Club? In a way it is. Everyone is invited to study the book, The Battle Plan for Prayer – From Basic Training to Targeted Strategies with us. If you cannot attend the meetings, I exhort you to study the book during your devotional time. The first sentence of this paragraph is the first sentence in the book. We are implored by **God** to realize the **power we have** in prayer! It is not just a ritual that has no effect. The Bible even exhorts to us: *‘The effectual fervent prayers of the righteous man availeth much.’*—James 5:16. Avaieth means to continue to do much!

Prayer is essential to our life as a Christian. I want to focus on the prayer that Jesus prayed **for His Followers** as found in John 17. Jesus was so focused on His Father’s Will being fulfilled that He went to God on our behalf to reconfirm that even though He was leaving the world as a human form He was not going to forget those that God gave Him. What did Jesus mention in this prayer that not only covered the disciples, but covered all the new believers – of which we are one?

First, Jesus was praying for those who believed that God had sent Jesus to the Earth. He was no longer going to be visible in the world, but He knew they would still be in the world. Jesus prayed that **God** would **guard them** as they pursued this new life through Jesus. Jesus said He guarded them while He was here. Now He is asking God to guard the believers. Jesus goes on in the prayer and says that because these **believers followed** His example and **did not** join the world’s ways He was not asking God to take them out of the world. (Remember, the world needs a visual example of God. This example is us—His children!) Jesus

asked more specifically: **guard** them **from** the **Evil One!**

Second, Jesus asked **God** to **make them holy**, consecrated, with the truth. It isn’t something we can just do on our own. We need God’s help! Jesus knew this life would not be an easy one. We would not fit in with the world. Jesus asked God on our behalf for help – help to make us!

Third, Jesus **gave** each believer **a mission** in the world – to be truth-consecrated in their mission. We must concentrate on and be consecrated to the truth—the Word of God! It is the Word that will make us holy. It is the Word that gives us the strength we need. It is the Word that gives us power.

As you read from verse 1 through verse 19 you may realize that Jesus was talking first about the disciples that walked with Him, but you may also realize that His words apply to the believers of today. If you have any doubts, read verse 20.

Fourth, Jesus made a point of saying that He was not only praying for those who were His earthly disciples, He was also praying for those who will believe in Him because of the disciples’ witness. This was important to add in His prayer so that there would be no mistake. His ultimate prayer goal: that **all believers** would **become one heart and mind**. His desire was for every believer to be one heart and mind with God and Jesus and the Holy Ghost. Then, the **world might believe** that God sent Jesus!

Fifth, Jesus **gave** us the **same glory** that God had given Him so that we might be unified and together as they are. Notice – He didn’t pray for God’s glory to be upon us; He gave us the glory! His desire was that we would mature in this oneness so that the godless world would evidence (see/know/have proof beyond a doubt) that God sent Jesus and loves the believers in the same way as He loves Jesus!

Sixth, Jesus prayed to the Father that He wanted those that God gave Him to **be with Him, right where He is!** He prayed that

God's love might be in the believers exactly as Jesus is in each of them.

Wow! What a prayer! Meditate upon this prayer. It is a personal prayer Jesus has prayed to the Father on **your** behalf! He **loves** you!

Now you know what Jesus wants for you. The remaining question is very personal – ask yourself, “How do I measure up to Jesus’ expectations?” As I said, this is a very personal question that only you can answer. If you fall short in any part of Jesus’ expectations, all you have to do is ask God to help you! Remember, **Jesus asked** God to **guard and make us**. The enemy might say, ‘God won’t hear you. God won’t help you.’ Being the devil’s advocate, do you think God would turn a deaf ear to Jesus? Do you think God would answer Jesus’ prayer even if He didn’t hear/answer yours? The answer to that is – God heard Jesus’ prayer! God is answering Jesus’ prayer! **God will help you!** Don’t listen to the enemy’s voice! Listen to Jesus’ words as He prayed them to our Father God. His Words are **LIVING WORDS!** Words that **never** die!