

Today we explore Jesus's prayer in John's gospel, chapter 17 verses 6-19. It forms part of a longer prayer for his disciples that Jesus says in the garden just before he is arrested.

You will see that it is colour coded. This is to show how closely Jesus's prayer is tied up with God and those for whom he is praying.

Everything relating to **Jesus (I) is yellow**, to **God (YOU) is blue**, and to **Jesus's disciples (THEY) is grey**.

Jesus prays for his disciples

'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. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and I kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

'I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. 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. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

We learned in Junior Church the classic format of prayer:

- **Thank you** – we thank God for all that he has given us
- **Sorry** – we can tell God those things that we are not proud of
- **Please** – we can ask God to help us or other people

We know that the Lord's Prayer is always a good back-up when we do not know what to pray. Jesus himself gave it to his disciples when they asked 'Lord, teach us how to pray.'

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.



However, as we get older and our faith develops, we may want to find more ways to explore prayer and spirituality.

All people are spiritual beings. But we don't express this spirituality in uniform ways.

How we connect with God and express our ultimate concerns differs from person to person.



The Canadian writer David Csinos has identified 4 'spiritual styles' which we will explore a little more below. These preferences affect us in deep ways, shaping the way we make sense of the world, what we value, how we live out our quest to transcend the here-and-now, and our relationships with others.

Q What style of worship helps you to pray? Quiet, active, music, reading or a combination?

We will examine the four styles on the next page:

Four Spiritual Styles

Q What style of worship helps you to pray? Quiet, active, music, reading or a combination?

1. A word-centred approach to spirituality

Spoken and written words are central to the spiritual lives of word-centred people, for it is through these words that they learn about God and the world around them, and thus grow as spiritual persons.

Q How important is it to you to study the Bible in detail?

2. An emotion-centred approach to spirituality

This approach upholds feelings as the core of spirituality. For these people, having deep emotional experiences is what tends the garden of the soul

Q What place does music or art have in the way you like to express your faith?

3. A symbol-centred approach to spirituality

People who prefer this style value abstract symbols, images and metaphors over concrete words and emotions. People with this style value ineffable sensing of God's presence. Nature is a locus of the divine for people with a preference for this style. Symbol-centred people often sense God in times of silence, quiet and solitude.

Q How do you react to time for private reflection or meditation within worship?

4. An action-centred approach to spirituality

Action-centred spirituality is based on a seemingly unquenchable thirst for justice. Instead of focusing on what one thinks, feels or senses, people of this style focus on what brings about positive transformation in the world. Spirituality is more lived than spoken or felt. God is seen in the cry of the poor rather than the beauty of an icon.

Q What part does action for justice play in your life?

Material taken from Roots on the Web. For a more in-depth version of this article, please visit

https://www.rootsontheweb.com/media/19318/roots_spiritual_styles_introductory_article.pdf