

5.13.18

Overhearing Prayers

John 17:9–11

Have you ever prayed with your child? Have you ever had your mother pray with you? What was it like to hear the prayer of your child? What was it like to hear the prayer of your mother? Sunday is Mother's Day, and this Sunday we overhear the prayer of Jesus for his disciples in John 17:9–11.

The prayer actually runs from verses 1–26. Verses 1–5 focus on Jesus's glorification. Verses 6–19 focus on Jesus' concerns for the disciples. Verses 20–26 express Jesus' request for his disciples' unity and mutual love. When we read this scripture, we get to overhear this prayer. We hear Jesus has made God's teachings known to the disciples and the world. We hear the disciples were given to Jesus by God. We hear the disciples and Jesus are one. We hear Jesus praying for the disciples—to bless them and God to be with them so they may be like Jesus and God in the world. Jesus wants us to hear that just as God sent Jesus into the world, so too Jesus sends the disciples and us into the world to continue his mission.

When you overheard prayers with your mother or child, how did you feel? Were you comforted? Did you understand what was being said? Were you encouraged? When you hear someone pray for you, what is your response or feeling? Sunday we will hear children give thanks for their mothers. They may not think of it as prayer, but anytime we express thanks, it is a prayer. You won't want to miss it.

We see in this passage that Jesus cares greatly for his disciples, as he is asking God to protect them when he says: "watch over them." Christ says to God, "for those you gave me" ... "They belong to you." Jesus believed his disciples belonged to him and God. How many times have you prayed for your children to be watched over and protected? Christ prays for his family as we pray for our families.

Do we realize we belong to God and Christ? 1 Corinthians 3:23 states, "You belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God." 1 John 3 tells us that we are God's children. We are part of and belong in God's family! My favorite prayer with my children when they were going to sleep was "Brendan or Shauna, child of God, you have nothing to fear. God is with you." I hope they heard they are loved and belong to our family.

We are a part of God's family. We are the body of Christ. We are a community of faith. The passage asks us to think about what it means to be a part of the family of God. We are unconditionally loved. We are forgiven. We are called to treat the world as God and Jesus have loved the world.

On Mother's Day we pray and give thanks for the times and ways our mother's brought us into a family. Like Christ taught us, we are part of God's family, and we learn about what it is like to be in a family by our mothers, both the good and the bad.

Mothers worry about their children like Jesus worried about the disciples. Jesus prayed for their protection and mothers pray for their children's protection. As parents, when we realize children are gifts from God and belong to God, we can become less anxious. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6).

Think about it – Pray about it – Live it

*Bob*