

"The Christ Circle. "

John 15:26-7 & John 16:4-15.

The scripture just read is sometimes called: "Jesus' Forgotten Prayer." It is "The Lord's Prayer," from the Saviour's "Sermon on the Mount," that is referenced most. Jesus taught it as a simple way for us to revere God, humble ourselves in his presence as well as tell God that we need his grace and love everyday. Indeed, we should honour it, firstly. It is the most effective way to pray-the spiritual exercise we need always to be nearer to God.

Yet Jesus taught another godliness lesson in his "forgotten" prayer. Christ first proclaimed to God and before the apostles of his faithful earthly service fulfillment before he returned to Heaven. And Jesus did so by reaffirming to God that he had taught the disciples and all other followers everything that God had given him to teach. Jesus was being a good rabbi. He, like all rabbis before him, presented a farewell pastoral prayer to his followers with assurance he had served them well. He surely had.

And then came Jesus' most important proclamation: He had annointed the disciples with Holiness. The Holy Spirit would faithfully touch them as well as all whom they would baptise and teach with special gifts to bless others. These gifts would then be passed from one person as well as generation to another through prayer and daily application. The Circle of Christ of which we are all apart and as one heavenly body would therefore be forever expanded by the sharing of these "Holiness Gifts."

St. Patrick of Ireland prayed that he would be like Christ in everyway, every day. That would be his blessing to all. St. Francis of Assisi prayed to be a

channel of God's peace in all ways. John Calvin, our Reform faith founder, asked that his hands be annointed with the best vocational performance as a godly talent with to bless all. John Wesley, Methodism's founder, prayed to be a light of grace and mercy to bring forth a more Christ centered world. George Washington, the first U.S. president, asked God to bless all in government service including himself-with humility and justice to help create a great nation. And the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. prayed that everyone from all walks of life would learn to walk in unity thus bringing out goodness in each other as Christ did in his walk amongst us. These prayers are regarded as some of the world's greatest ever. Rightly so. They are each a continuation of Jesus' forgotten prayer. Each one asks for ways we can be Holier for God and Savior.

Yet what might our own prayers say to contribute to Holiness? Prayer to adopt others-particularly strangers most challenged-with our hearts is a blessed start. We must let those needy know that they are our personal investments. We will not give up on them until they reveal the best person that God has made them to be. Jesus, after all, never gave up on us, even forgiving and welcoming "strangers" into Heaven whilst on the Cross. Also, prayer for greater Presence to those needy brings forth more Holiness. Our simple presence to remain silent, peaceful, and attentive to others whose needs are often greater than our own brings forth Christ's loving presence in us. Others will know they are loved. And they will see Jesus in us! Jesus' quiet presence worked for the Samaritan woman at the well to whom Jesus offered Hope. She was never the same. Others whom we bless with Caring Presence will change heart as well. What a sight to picture and even better to behold!

Let us therefore share all Holiness Gifts through prayer and self giving as we begin Pentecost. Jesus did. And His Love gifts will continue to pass through us giving Holiness to one another. This Holiness Giving and Sharing expands the Christ Circle. It brings us closer to home in the Kingdom through Love.

Amen.