

PRAYERS OF JESUS – JESUS PRAYS FOR PETER

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”
(Luke 22:31-32)

Icebreaker: Has there ever been something that you thought you were REALLY good at, only to learn that you really were NOT so good? What was it and how did you learn the “bad news”?

THE CONTEXT OF THE TEACHING: This reading from Luke 22 takes place on the night of the “last supper.” Jesus knows that he will be betrayed by Judas and denied by Peter. He knows he will be arrested, condemned, badly beaten and nailed to the cross by the next day. This is his last intimate meal with his close friends and followers before his death.

As a group, take turns reading out loud Luke 22: 14-34.

How many prayers of Jesus do you see in this reading?

What was Jesus giving thanks for when he broke bread with his disciples?

The surface lesson about prayer: Jesus teaches us to “say grace” (thanks) before eating our food! **Why** is that a good practice? **Where and when** do you say grace (family settings, church gatherings, public restaurants)?

A deeper lesson about prayer: What do the bread and wine represent? Is Jesus giving thanks to God for his coming suffering and death? How so and why so?

Should we also thank God when suffering and trials come into our lives? How might thanking God for our suffering help us to endure and overcome our suffering?

THE CONFLICT: What “dispute” is being discussed among the disciples during and around this last supper?

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is showing his friends that he is about to be killed and his friends are fussing about what they want for themselves?

Use your imagination: What do you think caused this dispute among the friends of Jesus? Why did it come to a head on this particular night? They were arguing about which of them was better, or “the greatest.” But, the greatest *at what?* Were they arguing about who loved Jesus the most – or who Jesus loved more than the others – or what?

Jesus warns them that “*Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.*” What does “sift as wheat” mean? Can you think of a more modern way of saying what Satan wanted to do to the disciples?

Why did Satan “ask” for permission? Who did he ask?

How does it make you feel to know that Satan has to ask permission to attack you when you are in the household of Jesus?

How do you explain the fact that Jesus gave Satan permission to “sift” Simon Peter? How does that make you feel?

Jesus says that Satan had asked permission to sift ALL the disciples, but focuses especially on Peter. He says, “But I have prayed for *you*, Simon ...”

Why did Jesus focus especially on his prayer for Simon Peter?

What new name did Jesus give to Simon when Simon confessed his faith in Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God”? (See Matthew 16:16-18).

Why did Jesus revert in this passage to calling Peter by his human name (Simon) instead of his faith name (Peter)?

Why did Jesus call out Simon’s name three times in this passage?

What specific prayer did Jesus pray for Simon Peter? What is he “faith” that Jesus prayed for?

In the model prayer (also known as the Lord’s Prayer) Jesus teaches us to pray: “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*” How does the model prayer compare to Jesus’ prayer for Simon Peter?

In what way did Jesus’ prayer work to “deliver” Peter from the power of the evil one?

The rest of the story: Turn your Bibles again to Luke 22 and share with the group what happened to Simon Peter that night?

But then turn to John 21:1-19. Does this passage show us how the prayer of Jesus for the faith of Peter was answered by God?

Apply it: Honestly, would you rather have Jesus deliver you from the evil one by saying “NO!” when Satan asks to attack you – or say “YES!” and then pray for you to overcome the attacker?

Read Hebrews 7:25-26. How does this passage relate to the Prayer of Jesus for Simon Peter?

How does it make you feel to know that Jesus can “save completely” because he “always lives to make intercession” (that includes prayer) for you?

Your church pastors and Home Group leaders also consider it a privilege and holy responsibility to pray intercessory prayers on your behalf. We hope you will be open with us about your prayer needs.

What “intercessory prayer” do you need right now?