

A hymn to Christ—High Priest

A reflection on John 17

by Grant Thorpe

We did not ask you to pray for us, or pray for ourselves to be strong.
Nor sought our strength in your actions, nor longed for the life of your heaven.
We longed for a union of spirits and a love that would cover the earth,
But saw not the need for your passion to sanctify us in the truth.

You came and prayed in our hearing, a prayer to the Father of love
A prayer—in union with actions—to establish a people of God.
All power was yours to deliver—to those whom your Father made yours—
A life of knowing the Father and yourself: the Son of his love.

You asked that joy of your victory, a joy that was natively yours
Would be given to us who were broken—whose hopes were tawdry and worn.
You prayed that we'd be the Father's, not Satan's—though still in this world,
And asked for the oneness to come to us, which you had known from of old.

But who could come to the Father, if the prayer was only in words?
And where be the merit in speaking if the cry of your flesh were not heard?
Your life would be totally given, abandoned to God and his will
And a truth fresh and new be established, to sanctify those whom you willed.

The place of this prayer was a rough cross, and the darkness fearfully sent,
A horror of darkness upon you who bore our misdeeds in your flesh.
You cried the prayer of the lostness, the vain-ness and anguish and shame
Of a sinner abandoned, uncared for: 'My God! You've left me alone.'

In giving yourself to the Father, you'd given yourself for us all.
You'd approached your Father in our name and felt the curse on our fall.
You knew it was finished and said so, and spent, but noble and tall
Commended yourself to your Father, awaiting the raising of all.

In rising you rose to the Father. You live to this God who is ours.
We're in you, and in the Father, and are one in the love you've revealed.
The truth of this great intercession is more than the fact of our fall
And the world has before it a people whose living from heaven is called.

This is the prayer that you now pray, our High Priest at right hand of God,
Living to make intercession until all the nations have heard
No battle or trying temptation, no care or weakness or need
Can part us from you and the Father, or from each other who heed.