

JOHN

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 17 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are several hours away from the crucifixion of Jesus as He continues to instill in His men the things of God so that they could carry on after His departure!

Remember, Jesus and His men, except for Judas, finished the Passover meal together, they have left the upper room where they had the meal, and they were making their way through the streets of Jerusalem, past the Temple and towards the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane.

And here in John chapter 17 we have the Lord's prayer. I realize that shocks some people. Why are they shocked by that statement?

Because, when we think of the Lord's prayer most people go to Matthew 6:9-13 as Jesus said, **"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."**

Please understand that this is not the Lord's prayer, it is a pattern to pray by. It is also not a formula to pray, but a pattern to pray by!

As we come to John chapter 17, this is really the Lord's prayer, as we shall see. In John 17:1-5 we see Jesus pray for Himself. Then, in John 17:6-19 we see Jesus pray for His apostles. And lastly, in John 17:20-26 we see Jesus pray for the church in the world, you and me, all believers!

Make no mistake about it, there are some great prayers in the Bible. We see the prayer of Abraham in Genesis chapter 18 as he intercedes for Sodom.

In Exodus chapter 32 we see the prayer of Moses as he intercedes for the children of Israel.

In I Kings chapter 8 we see the prayer of Solomon as the Temple is dedicated.

We see the prayer of Nehemiah in Nehemiah chapter 1 as he too is interceding for his people, the Jews and their return to Jerusalem under very difficult times. The walls were not built yet to protect the city.

And Daniel chapter 9 as Daniel is also interceding for the Jewish people and their return home from captivity!

Make no mistake about it, these are all very powerful prayers by godly men, but, by far, the greatest prayer ever recorded in the Bible has to be the one here in John chapter 17, the prayer of Jesus.

It is the holy of holies of prayers you might say as our Great High Priest makes intercession for His people, you and me!

To give you an idea of how great this prayer is, Marcus Rainsford, who worked closely with D. L. Moody, wrote,

The whole prayer is a beautiful illustration of our blessed Lord's intercession at the right hand of God. Not a word against His people; no reference to their failings, or their shortcomings. . . . No. He speaks of them only as they were in the Father's purpose, as in association with Himself, and as the recipients of the fulness He came down from heaven to bestow upon them. . . . All the Lord's particular petitions for His people relate to spiritual things; all have reference to heavenly blessings.

The Lord does not ask riches for them, or honours, or worldly influence, or great preferments, but He does most earnestly pray that they may be kept from evil, separated from the world, qualified for duty, and brought home safely to heaven. Soul prosperity is the best prosperity; it is the index of true prosperity.

- Marcus Rainsford

And J. Vernon McGee had this to say as he quotes some famous Christians about this chapter in the Gospel of John and then gives some of his insights of this chapter. He wrote,

Matthew Henry: "It is the most remarkable prayer following the most full and consoling discourse ever uttered on the earth."

Martin Luther: "This is truly beyond measure a warm and hearty prayer. He opens the depths of His heart, both in reference to us and to His Father, and He pours them all out. It sounds so honest, so simple. It is so deep, so rich, so wide. No one can fathom it."

Philip Melanchthon, another of the reformers: "There is no voice which has ever been heard, either in heaven or in earth, more exalted, more holy, more fruitful, more sublime than the prayer offered up by the Son to God Himself."

This is the prayer which John Knox read over and over in his lifetime. When he was on his deathbed, his wife asked him. "Where do you want me to read?" He replied, "Read where I first put my anchor down, in the seventeenth chapter of John." We have the record of many others who have read it over and over. Dr. Fisher, who was bishop of Rochester under Henry VIII, had this read as the last portion of Scripture just before his martyrdom.

This is a great portion of Scripture. I feel wholly and totally inadequate to deal with this prayer. It is His high priestly intercession for us. It is a revelation to us of the communication which, I think, constantly passes between the Lord Jesus and the Father in heaven. His entire life was a life of prayer. He began His ministry by going into a solitary place to pray. Often He went up into a mountain to pray and spent the night in prayer. He is our great Intercessor. He prays for you and for me. If you forgot to pray this morning, He didn't. He prayed for you this morning.

- J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible* Vol. IV, p. 477

I think we need to put things into perspective here. Jesus knows what is ahead for Him. He is going to go to the cross of Calvary and He will be crucified for the sins of the world. The Father will break fellowship with the Son as the sins of the world are placed upon Him.

So, not only the intense pain of the crucifixion, but this separation that Jesus never experienced in eternity past and will never experience again in eternity future.

All this is going on and He takes the time to pray. Let me put it this way, that was the best thing He could do.

Think about this for a minute. When we are going through difficult times, when things are overwhelming us, when we are so busy that we don't have time to sit down, do we take the time to pray?

"I don't have time to pray!" you might say. But here's the thing, that is exactly what you need to do. Follow the example of Jesus and take the time to pray. Bring your requests before the Father and lay them at His feet and rest in Him. What a great example the Lord has given to us.

We are so privileged to listen in on this conversation that Jesus is having with the Father just as He is about to go to the cross of Calvary to pay in full the penalty for our sins, to be the perfect sacrifice for sinners, you and me!

With that in mind, as we open up here in John chapter 17, we will begin with Jesus praying for Himself. A very interesting prayer as you will see and I think it is interesting that He is praying for Himself. Too often we see that as being selfish but not Jesus, He prayed for Himself and thus, so should we. We need prayer!

With that as our background, let's begin reading in John chapter 17, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word this evening.

JOHN 17

VERSE 1

We are coming to the reason that God became flesh and dwelt among us, to pay the debt of our sin, something we could never pay. And not only pay it, but pay it in full, the work will be completed. The hour had come!

And as you read through this prayer please understand that this is not a prayer from man to God. This is a prayer from the God-Man, Jesus Christ, to the Father. They are equals. One writer put it like this, "The request of our Lord thus given in John's seventeenth chapter is clearly no prayer of an inferior to a superior: constantly there is seen in it the co-equality of the Speaker with The Father. The Two have but one mind. . . . Where the Son speaks He is not seeking to bend The Father to Him: rather is He voicing the purpose of the Godhead." (Trench)

Again, the focus of Jesus here is the cross, which was a symbol of humiliation to the world but by it the Son is glorified. How? It was an act of obedience unto the Father and through it the Father is also glorified. It shows the love, the compassion, the forgiveness of God towards man.

It is as Morris wrote, “To men the cross appeared an instrument of shame. To Christ it was the means of true glory.”

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, **“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”**

You see, as we serve the Lord the world may shake their heads at us, they may see our work as unbecoming, but through it the Father is glorified as we walk in obedience to Him!

Now, how does Jesus glorify the Father? As we will see in the next two verses, Jesus glorifies the Father by giving eternal life to those who believe on Him. The Father sent Jesus to pay for the sins of man and with the completed work, as men come to Jesus, the Father is glorified! And as they come to the Lord, they are His representatives. And as we have seen, our good works will glorify our Father in heaven!

As one writer put it, “The Son glorified the Father by revealing in this act [the cross] the sovereignty of God over evil, the compassion of God for men, and the finality of redemption for believers.” (Tenney)

Let’s read on and see what Jesus is praying for next.

VERSES 2-3

As you read these verses, who has authority over all flesh? Jesus said that the Father has given Him this authority over all flesh. And not only does He have this authority over all flesh, but He has the ability to give eternal life to man.

What does that mean? Jesus here claimed, “authority to determine the ultimate destiny of men.” (Takser)

In other words, Jesus is Almighty God! Only God can give eternal life to man and because He is God He has authority over mankind, since He is the creator of all things!

Now this is where it gets tricky and some get tripped up on this. Jesus said in John 17:3, **“... that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.”** Does that mean God has predestined some people for heaven, those that He gave to Jesus to save, and some people for hell, those that He did not predestine for heaven.

That is partially true. You see, God does predestine us for heaven. But, we must also look at man’s responsibility to come to the Lord, to receive that free gift of eternal life that is found in Jesus.

So, the answer is simple. It is 100% God’s sovereignty, predestination! And, it is 100% man’s free will to choose the Lord!

You see, you can make a case for both and that is where people draw the line and separate to one side or the other. And I believe that is wrong. Let me show you just a few verses so you can see that man has a choice.

And if you think about it, if man did not have a choice in his salvation, then those that God predestined for hell could blame God for sending them there. Make no mistake about it, God does not send anyone to hell, man chooses to go there because he has a free will.

Also, if God made us do something, like go to heaven, then is there a love relationship there or are we being forced to do something that we do not want to do?

Let's look at these verses that deal with man's responsibility to choose.

In Revelation 3:20 we read "**Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**"

The picture here is God knocking and we have a choice to open the door of our heart and let Him in or reject Him. Man's free will to choose and if you reject the Lord, then you are not predestined to heaven!

Now some may feel that is not fair. Well, you do have a choice to make. Come to Christ and you will see that you were predestined for heaven. God knows all but He does not force anyone to do anything. It is man's choice! He does not create us for hell, not at all!

Also, in Matthew 11:28-30 we are told, "**Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.**"

Once again we see a choice that each of us need to make. Jesus gives an invitation to us and we can come or we can reject Him!

In John 7:37-38 we read, "**On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'**"

Again, we see the invitation of God and a choice we have to make. You see, it is God's sovereign will and it is our free choice, we do play a part. It is not something I can reconcile with my finite mind, but it is what the Scriptures teach.

In Hebrews 2:9 Paul tells us, **“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.”**

Who did Jesus die for? **“Everyone.”** I think that is clear. He did not just die for the elect or those He predestined!

In Acts 17:30 we are told, **“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.”**

Who did God command to repent? The elect or those He predestined to save? No, the call is for all men to repent! That means every person has a choice to make, salvation is open to all!

Notice what Jesus says in John 5:40, **“But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.”**

Do you see that? **“you are not willing to come to Me”** and to me, that is a choice on our part. Man’s free will!

Also, in I John 2:2 John tells us, **“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”**

Jesus is the propitiation for just the select few? No, **“the whole world.”**

And there are many more that speak of man’s free will to choose.

It is a difficult concept and it has been debated for years with both sides digging their heels into the sand to fight. To me, it is simple. God’s sovereignty, He predestines us. And man’s free will to choose. Hard to reconcile in our finite minds, but it is what the Scriptures teach.

Think of it as railroad tracks. One of the tracks is the sovereignty of God, predestination. The other track is man’s free will to choose. Those tracks run parallel to each other, they don’t cross, they don’t intersect each other.

Therefore, when the train is on those tracks, it will take that train to the destination that it is going!

The same is true for us. Predestination and man's free will are the tracks that lead us to heaven, into the arms of God.

Also, I believe it was Ironside who gave this illustration of free will and predestination, gives us a correct picture of what is going on, how they work together, free will and predestination.

Imagine, that when you die you arrive in the afterlife and you see a door, which says, "***All who will may enter.***" And as you open the door and enter in you see a huge and beautiful banquet table all set for a feast and names at every place setting. Now, to your surprise, as you look at the names on the cards you find your name. As the door begins to close you notice on the inside of the door a sign that says, "***Predestined before the foundations of the world.***"

I think that is the correct perspective of free will and predestination, at least to try to understand it with our human minds!

And here in John 17:3 we see the call to those who want eternal life. Jesus says that if you want that eternal, that abundant life, then you must come to Him for that eternal life is only found in Jesus!

There is no eternal life, or should I say abundant life, joyful eternal life outside of Christ. Those who reject Jesus will have eternal life apart from Him in the Lake of Fire!

And when Jesus says, "**that they may know You**" "In the Greek the verb is in the present subjunctive indicating the 'knowledge' is a growing experience." (Tasker)

We grow in the Lord as we live out our lives. It is through our daily experiences that we come to know God more intimately!

VERSES 4-5

As we have seen as we have been going through these verses, the cross is in view. That is the work that Jesus came to finish. And yet, notice what Jesus said here. **“I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.”**

If the cross was before Him how can He say He finished the work? Because nothing is going to stop Him from completing the work that is before Him. What God says He is going to do, He will do!

In knowing that, there is a similar sense in which God sees our own work of transformation and perfection as already complete, before the fact.

Let me show you what I mean. In Romans 8:30 Paul tells us, **“Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”**

Yes, God has called us, He has justified us and one day we will be taken up into glory. For most of us we see this as a future event, and it is.

The only problem with that kind of thinking is that Paul is speaking of this glorification in the past tense.

In fact, all of these points are spoken in the past tense, and some will say, “Yes, I am called and justified because God foreknew me and predestined me. But in regard to this glorification, I don’t see that!” But it is true!

You see, Paul is speaking of something that hasn’t take place yet with such certainty because this is not based upon man’s faithfulness to complete it but God’s faithfulness! God will complete the work He started because He foreknew us!

Or as Paul put it in Philippians 1:6, “**being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.**” God will complete what He has started in us. In fact, He already sees the finished product!

A few more points we need to look at before we move on. In John 17:5 Jesus prays, “**And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.**”

When did Jesus empty Himself of His glory? When He became flesh and dwelt among us. Paul speaks of this in Philippians 2:6-11, as he speaks of Jesus, “**who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**”

In Philippians 2:7, that phrase, “**made Himself of no reputation**” speaks of the fact that Jesus “**emptied himself**” of all the rights He had as being deity and took on the body of not just a man, but a servant!

It was not that Jesus was 50% God and 50% man but He was 100% God and 100% man in the incarnation and God alone can do that. I may not understand that, but it is what the Scriptures teach. Then what did Jesus empty Himself of?

First of all, He emptied Himself of His divine glory, (John 17:1, 5).

Secondly, He emptied Himself of His divine authority, (John 5:30).

Thirdly, He emptied Himself of some of His divine attributes, He did not stop being omniscient or all-knowing; He did not stop being omnipresent or present everywhere; He did not stop being omnipotent or all-powerful; He did not stop being immutable or unchanging but He chose not to exercise those attributes during His earthly ministry. We see Him get up early to pray and seek direction from His Father, (Mark 13:32).

The fourth thing Jesus emptied Himself of was His eternal riches that are due Him, He became poor in the incarnation and a servant of all, (II Corinthians 8:9, Mark 10:45).

The fifth thing that Jesus emptied Himself of when He became flesh and blood was that He temporarily emptied Himself of His intimate relationship with the Father as He bore the sins of the world on the cross of Calvary, (Matthew 27:46).

Thus, Jesus is asking the Father to restore the glory that He had before the Incarnation. It is as Tenney wrote, “He had one main petition: that the Father would receive him back to the glory he had relinquished to accomplish his task. This petition for a return to his pristine glory implies unmistakably his preexistence and equality with the Father. It confirms his claim that he and the Father are one (John 10:30).”

Once again we see the deity of Jesus. How can I say that? Because Jesus speaks of receiving the glory that He once had with the Father and yet Isaiah 42:8 says, “**I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.**”

And in Isaiah 48:11 we are told, “**For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.**”

Make no mistake about it, if Jesus was not God, He could not ask for this glory. But since He is, He is just going to receive back that which He had before the incarnation! You see, if the Father and the Son share this glory, they must be *YAHWEH!*

It is as John 1:1-2 tells us in regard to the deity of Jesus, “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.**”

As we read on we now come to Jesus’ prayer for His disciples.

VERSES 6-8

Jesus is speaking of His disciples, the ones the Father gave to Him and He is praying for them. Isn’t that great! And what encouraging words Jesus spoke of His men, even in all their failures, He encourages them, they were faithful, they understood where He was from, and even in their failures, Jesus knew their hearts.

Also, what I want you to see here is that when Jesus says, “**I have manifested Your name to the men You have given Me out of the world**” it is not that Jesus declared these things to His men verbally, but what Jesus is saying here is that He lived it out or He revealed the nature of God in His life, the things that He did, and not necessarily the things that He said. Now I am not saying that Jesus did not verbal teach them, He did. But specifically here the idea is living these things and that is what they were seeing!

How important is that for us. Yes, we are to verbally share Jesus with people, but we are also to live in such a way that people will also see Jesus in us!

VERSES 9-10

Notice that Jesus is not praying to transform the system. He is not praying to politically organize to change the system. What He is praying for are those that the Father has called out of the world's system so that they can save people out of the world's system!

Now I know, it does seem harsh that Jesus is not praying for the world, in a sense He is ignoring the world. Why would He say that, why would He do that? First of all, if it does not fit the picture of Jesus then we are not seeing it correctly.

Morgan put it this way, and I believe he is correct in his view. He said, "He was praying for the instrument He was creating, through which He would reach the world." Thus, it was important to pray for these men as they were to carry on the work, as I have said.

Now today, man loves to receive the glory, the attention, the awards and-so-on. But as you can see, we don't get the glory but God does.

That is important, especially in our day when we like to exalt self, receive the praise of men, instead of giving glory to the One who has enabled us to do the things we are doing.

If you don't think this is a big deal, then just listen to what happened to Herod, a man who refused to give glory to God.

In Acts 12:20-23 we are told, **“Now Herod had been very angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon; but they came to him with one accord, and having made Blastus the king’s personal aide their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was supplied with food by the king’s country. So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. And the people kept shouting, ‘The voice of a god and not of a man!’ Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the word of God grew and multiplied.”**

A good incentive to give glory to the One who deserves it, and even if you refuse, God’s Word will go forth with you or without you!

VERSES 11-12

As you read through these verses you see Jesus pray for two things. First of all, He is praying that they would be kept or protected. You see, tribulation was ahead for these men and Jesus prays to the Father to keep them, preserve them, protect them as they go through these times and the Father did do that.

The other prayer is that they should be one. And some have taken this to unbiblical conclusions. Unity is based in truth and apart from truth there can be no unity! That is important for us to understand.

Also, Jesus says that He lost no one, except for Judas. Does that mean that Judas walked away from his salvation when he departed?

No, Judas was never saved. He was a tare amongst the wheat. In fact, Jesus called him the devil, (John 6:70). Therefore, Judas was never saved and that is why he was not kept!

In fact, John said in I John 2:19, **“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”** You see, he never really was a part of them, and in the end, his true colors were manifested!

VERSES 13-16

I believe that Jesus is speaking of the sanctification process here. Why do I say that? Because the world hates us because we stand up for God, we expose their sin by just shinning for Jesus!

And true sanctification comes through the Word of God. Jesus said in John 15:3, **“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”**

Make no mistake about it, the more you grow in the Lord the less you love sin and the more you love God! You want to serve Him and be a blessing to others. And all this comes through His Word taken into our lives!

Jesus also speaks of a joy they have and the world does not have! What is this joy based upon?

His joy speaks of our abiding in Him, that is where our joy comes from and that is where it is based. Thus, I think you can understand why the world has no joy, they don't know the One who is giving it!

In I John 2:15-17 we are told, **“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.”**

What is interesting today is that the church wants to be like the world and it makes no sense. That is not where true joy is found and in the end, this world will pass away!

Thus, as we don't embrace the things of this world, as the light of God shines upon their darkness, the world reacts by hating us, persecuting us because we are not like them, we don't endorse their sin!

The thing we need to remember, the thing that Jesus warns us about, is they hated Him for standing up for the truth and as His servant, they will also hate us!

And Jesus says that He is not praying for them to be taken out of the world! Darn it! Why is that? Because it is in this world that we are representing Him, shinning for Him. We are not to isolate ourselves on some island but to be in this world but not of this world!

What do I mean by that? It is like a boat, it needs to be in the water to function, but when water gets in the boat it begins to sink.

The same is true in our own lives as we let the world in us. We are to be in the world but not of the world! Yes, we are to be in this world but too often we let the world get in us, and that is the problem, and we begin to sink!

Also, too often today people develop the heart of a Pharisee, looking down upon others, not wanting to touch them, and yet we have been sent into the world to present the Gospel message, to reach out to people! May we not forget that we are to be in the world, not of it!

VERSES 17-19

We are sanctified or set apart by the truth of God found in the Word of God as we read it, hear it and apply it to our lives.

In Ephesians 5:26 we are told, “**that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.**”

Thus, what God has given to us we are to go out into the world and give to others, share Christ with them!

And let me say this. God’s truth is given to us three ways. First of all, His Word is truth, which we see here in John 17:17. We are also told that His Son is truth, in John 14:6. And we are also told that the Spirit is truth, I John 5:6.

One more point and that is found in verse 19 where Jesus says, “**And for their sakes I sanctify Myself.**” Is Jesus saying He was unclean?

No, for if He was then He could not be that perfect sacrifice for our sins. Then what is He saying? I believe He is saying that “*I offer myself in sacrifice.*” He set Himself apart for the work that the Father sent Him to do!

And now, in verses 20-26 of John chapter 17 we see Jesus pray for the church, pray for you and me, ***HE PRAYS FOR ALL BELIEVERS!***

VERSE 20

Do you know who Jesus is speaking of? You and me and all who would come to believe in Him as their Lord and Savior. He is praying for us, interceding for us! Is that awesome! The work of Christ continues on through the disciples and now through you and me, the church!

Morgan wrote, “He prayed for them. He prays for us. He knew His intercession for them would prevail. He knows His intercession for us will prevail. Then let us rest in Him, with the rest of loving obedience and of surest confidence.”

And as we will see, Jesus is going to pray for unity with believers. I wonder why He is praying for unity? Because He knew the divisions over silly things, non-doctrinal issues that will come into the church and cause division.

VERSE 21

Please don't misunderstand what Jesus is praying for here when He prays for our unity! You see, the unity Jesus is speaking of is not ecumenical; just believe whatever you want, accepting all things.

This unity is based on the truth and Jesus just got done telling us that His Word is truth. Thus, as the Scriptures teach, Jesus is the One who unites us all together into the family of God and without Him there is no unity!

What the church has done today is they have put aside doctrine and are embracing this idea of unity! Look at the number of Protestant churches that are embracing Roman Catholicism and saying that they are our brothers and sisters in Christ!

They are not! How can I say that? Because they believe in a different Jesus. A Jesus who is still on the cross. A Jesus who did not pay in full the penalty for our sins!

They believe in a different Gospel. It is a Gospel that speaks of needing Jesus but then you must do good works to get to heaven, fulfill the sacraments, and even then you won't make it, you must go to Purgatory to atone for your sins because Jesus did not pay for all our sins, or so they say!

There is no unity apart from truth and yet, the compromises that are being made today are foolishness! That is not what Jesus was praying for!

Also, the church is in disunity over things that are not important, like I have said. And in the end, it is a pride issue.

Now is this unity important? Some might not think so but it is for Jesus tells us that it is this unity that will cause people to believe. It is the disunity, the fighting over silly things that causes the world to shake their heads and walk away in unbelief and how it must grieve God!

A. W. Tozer wrote,

Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers met together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become “unity” conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strife for closer fellowship.

- A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*, p. 97

Keep your eyes upon Jesus, do His will for your life and you will be in tune with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Do you own thing, then you will be out of tune and out of unity!

Remember what Jesus said in John 13:34-35, “**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**”

You see, our unity with believers is linked to the way the church represents Jesus to the world!

VERSE 22

What was the glory that Christ Had? Humility, compassion, suffering, and that is what we are to have in our own lives.

It is as Paul said in II Corinthians 1:5-7, **“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.”**

Morris put it like this, “Just as His true glory was to follow the path of lowly service culminating in the cross, so for them the true glory lay in the path of lowly service wherever it might lead them.”

Also, in II Corinthians 4:6 Paul tells us, **“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

God has put His glory in us, the knowledge of Him and thus, may we shine for Him as we live for Him!

VERSE 23-24

What is Jesus praying for us? That we be kept set apart, sanctified and in unity not only with God, but with other believers. Is that your heart’s desire for it was on the heart of Jesus before He was crucified!

And this unity that exists between the Father and the Son is the unity that is to exist between the believer and the Lord Jesus Christ!

I want you to also see this. In verse 23 here in John chapter 17, where Jesus said that He wants us to know how the Father, **“loved them as You have loved Me.”** In other words, did you realize that God the Father loves you as much as He loves Jesus! Wow, what more can I say! I don't think we understand the depth of God's love for us!

Jesus also prayed for us that we would be with Him in glory. That means every time a believer dies and goes to be with the Lord we see the Father answering this prayer of Jesus!

VERSES 25-26

Isn't it interesting how the world sees God and thinks they know Him when they really don't. All the unbiblical ideas, false doctrine they come up with and yet they don't know God.

But as we look at Jesus we see the Father, His love is manifested in us and through our lives! His truth is there for us in His Word.

One writer summed this up for us like this. He wrote,

That the love with which You loved Me may be in them: Jesus received love from God the Father, and this love relationship was the strength and sustenance of His life. Here, concluding His great prayer, Jesus prayed that the same love that was His strength and sustenance would fill His disciples (both near and far).

This speaks to the essential place of **love** in the Christian life and community. Jesus thought it so important that He specifically prayed for **love** when He might have prayed for many other things.

Take love from joy and you have only hedonism. [pleasure-seeking, self-indulgence]

Take love from holiness and you have self-righteousness.

Take love from truth and you have bitter orthodoxy.

Take love from mission and you have conquest.

Take love from unity and you have tyranny. [dictatorship]

- David Guzik

Make no mistake about it, without love, the agape love of God in our lives, we are not following the Lord but our own interests. And that worldly love will be what the people see, not the unconditional love of God, that agape love!

Paul tells us in Colossians 3:17 regarding what should come from our lives, “**And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**”

May we do that with joy in our hearts and love in our actions as our Lord and Savior has shown us!

And then we are told, “**When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.**” John 18:1. That is where we will pick up next time.