

February 7, 2021

Unit: Becoming More Like Jesus

Session 3: Intimacy with God, John 17

The Point: PRAYER draws us closer to Jesus as our hearts align with His.

Our setting today is the Farewell Discourse – the Last Supper – where Jesus teaches His disciples on the night of His arrest (chapters 13 – 17, only found in John’s gospel). This prayer follows communion, washing His disciples’ feet and introducing them to the counselor, the Holy Spirit.

John 17: 1 – 5 Addressing God

Jesus petitions His Father. He identifies the hour as NOW. He has finished God’s work. He is ready to give His life for Christians. Notice the extensive use of the word GLORIFY = to shed radiance, to magnify in worship – GLORY = exult with joy, praise honor, distinction. Our lesson book (p. 121) states that God’s shekinah glory, once residing in the temple, now rest in the incarnate Jesus. God’s glory lived in Christ! Jesus realized that the crucifixion, His atoning death was transfigured with GLORY.

John 12:23, 27 – 28 states: Jesus replied, “Thy hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified...Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour.’ No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.”

John 17: 6 – 19 Prayer for Jesus’ Disciples

This section of prayer was not assigned to you. Jesus is now praying for His 11 disciples. He asks God to protect and sanctify them. This section reminds me of a good prayer form which can draw us into greater intimacy with God.

P = Praise
R = Repent
A = Action
Y = Yield

Jesus praised God in verses 1 – 5. His repentance will come later that evening in the garden. His concern for His disciples fuels His thoughts in verses 6 – 19.

John 17: 20 – 26 Yielding to God

Jesus prays now for all Christians (verse 20). He prays for our unity as believers. John 17:22 is confusing: “I have given them the glory you have given me, so that they may be one as we are one.” How can we have Jesus’ glory? Note the rest of the sentence – “to be one.” We need to focus on the totality of the Christian purpose – to be one with Christ. Prayer helps us yield to God.

Verses 23 – 26 focus on the love between Father and Son. As we yield to the Trinity, we sense more and more how to share God’s love to those around us. As you pray, praise God for this almighty power and love in your life. Repent of your sins and God will purify you from all unrighteousness (I John 1:9) As we yield to almighty God, we draw closer to Him. Our intimacy will help us long for church unity and Christian love.

Summary

Jesus wants believers to be with Him in heaven – to encounter His glory. Do you want your friends to be with you in heaven? Share Christ’s love! We receive the joy – God gets the glory!

Here is a good message:

“True prayer is a way of life,
Not just for use in case of emergency.
Make it a habit, and when
The need arises you will be in practice.”

Billy Graham

Linda Breaks