

Praying One: Learning to Pray for Unity from Jesus' Prayer

ONE: THE BEING OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH | JOHN 17:1-26 | NOVEMBER 15, 2020 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

SERMON OUTLINE:

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You." (John 17:20-21)

A Summary of Jesus' Prayer in John 17

- Jesus prays for Himself (John 17:1-5)
- Jesus prays for His immediate disciples (John 17:6-19)
- Jesus prays for future disciples (John 17:20-26)

Diving Into Jesus' Prayer for Unity

- Jesus' prayer for those who will believe in Him through His disciples' word (17:20)
- Experiential oneness derived from the divine oneness (17:21)
- This oneness tied to the world believing Jesus was sent by God (17:21)
- Glory given to Jesus now given to the disciples for unity (17:22-23)
- Unity as a reflection of being loved by God (17:23-26)

Jesus' Prayer and Our Prayers

- Jesus prayed uniquely
- Our prayers can echo Jesus' prayer
- We will only live unified by prayer

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you seen prayer answered? What happened?
2. We continue our series on unity, "One: The Being of God in the Life of the Church," by looking at the prayer that Jesus prayed in John 17:1-26. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then read that passage aloud.
3. This prayer is often divided into three sections. Take a relatively quick look at the passage and summarize some of the main things you see Jesus praying for in each section:
 - Jesus prays for Himself (17:1-5)
 - Jesus prays for His immediate disciples (17:6-19)
 - Jesus prays for future disciples (17:20-26)
4. Is there anything that surprises you about what Jesus does or does not pray for?
5. Let's take a closer look at the final section related to unity, John 17:20-26. Whether you're alone or with a group, read it over for minute on your own and take note of some recurring words or themes in this portion of Jesus' prayer.
6. According to verses 20-21, what is the connection between Jesus' relationship with the Father and His prayer for believers?
7. Verses 22-23 talk about Jesus' glory. What is the relationship between Jesus' glory and the unity of believers?
8. According to the end of verse 21 and the end of verse 23 what does unity accomplish in relation to the mission of God?
9. How do you think unity either helps or hinders Christian mission in the world?
10. In verses 24-26 Jesus speaks of the love He has from the Father and how that is given to believers. How do you think this portion of the prayer relates to unity?
11. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study of Jesus' prayer for unity for God's people?
12. Regardless of whether you are on your own or with others, take some time to pray for the unity of God's people, both in the local church and in the church at large.

DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper into the theme of the positional unity of the church in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize John 17:20-21 this week.
- Take time to pray for unity within the local church every day this week in some way, either on your own or with others. Use John 17:20-26 as a basis for prayer.
- If you want to take a deep dive study into John 17, consider reading *The Assurance of Our Salvation (Studies in John 17): Exploring the Depth of Jesus' Prayer for His Own* by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.
- Continue with our season of prayer and fasting. Find more info here: <http://eastbrook.org/events/prayer-and-fasting-at-eastbrook-during-november/>.