

John 17:20–26 Sermon Discussion Guide

Passage Summary

As Jesus brings His High Priestly Prayer to its conclusion, we are given one final glimpse into His heart before He goes to the cross. These are not merely lofty theological statements, but they are the deepest desires of the Son for His people. Just hours before His betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion, Jesus prays not for Himself, but for all who will believe in Him through the testimony of His disciples. That means this prayer includes every believer today.

At the center of this section are three remarkable requests. First, Jesus prays that His people would **see His glory**. He longs for us not merely to know facts about Him or admire His teaching, but to behold His beauty, worth, and majesty. Throughout Scripture, it is the vision of God's glory that transforms His people. As we increasingly see Christ for who He truly is, our loves, priorities, worship, and obedience begin to change; not through external pressure, but because our hearts have been captivated by something infinitely more beautiful..Jesus.

Second, Jesus prays that His followers would know **the depth of the Father's love**. In one of the most astonishing statements in all of Scripture, Jesus says that the Father loves believers **"even as"** He loves the Son. Because we are united to Christ by faith, we are welcomed into the very love that has existed between the Father and the Son from all eternity. This love is not based on our performance or our ability to earn God's approval. It rests entirely on the finished work of Christ, who stood in our place so that we might be accepted as beloved children of God.

Finally, Jesus expresses His deepest desire: *"Father, I desire that they also...may be with me where I am."* The goal of salvation is not simply the forgiveness of sins or escaping judgment. It is communion with Christ Himself. One day, every believer will behold His glory face to face and enjoy His presence forever. Even now, through the Holy Spirit, we experience the firstfruits of that promise as Christ dwells with His people. The Christian life is lived with joyful anticipation, knowing that our future is secure because Jesus Himself has prayed that we would be with Him.

Theological Highlights

1. We Are Transformed by Beholding Christ

Spiritual growth is not ultimately driven by trying harder but by seeing Jesus more clearly. As we behold His glory, the Holy Spirit conforms us into His likeness.

2. The Father's Love Is Our Greatest Security

Because believers are united to Christ, the Father loves us with the very love He has for His Son. Our acceptance rests on Christ's righteousness, not our own.

3. Union with Christ Changes Everything

Every spiritual blessing flows from our union with Jesus. We are forgiven, adopted, loved, and welcomed because we are "in Christ."

4. Heaven Is Ultimately About Christ

The greatest promise of eternity is not simply a place without suffering, but the presence of the Savior Himself. Jesus desires that His people would be with Him forever.

5. Future Hope Shapes Present Living

Knowing where our story ends gives courage in suffering, perseverance in holiness, and confidence in God's promises today.

Discussion Questions

Beholding Christ's Glory

1. Jesus' greatest desire is that His people would see His glory.

- When you think about following Jesus, do you tend to focus more on doing things for Him or delighting in Him?
- Why do you think that is?

2. The sermon emphasized the difference between knowing facts about Jesus and truly seeing His glory.

- Have there been seasons when Christ became especially precious or beautiful to you?
- What was God using during that season?

3. What things most often compete for your attention and affection, making it difficult to fix your eyes on Christ?

Resting in the Father's Love

4. Jesus says the Father loves believers "**even as**" He loves the Son.

- What emotions or questions does that statement stir in you?
- Is it easy or difficult for you to believe personally?

5. Many Christians believe God forgives them but still struggle to believe He delights in them.

- Why do you think that is such a common struggle?
- How does the gospel speak into that fear?

6. When you fail or fall into sin, what is your instinctive response?

- Do you hide from God?

- Try harder?
- Become discouraged?

How does remembering your union with Christ reshape that response?

7. The sermon reminded us that nothing can make God love us more, and nothing can make Him love us less because our acceptance is rooted in Christ.

- How would believing that more deeply change your everyday life?

Living with Eternal Hope

8. Jesus' final request is that His people would be with Him forever.

- How does that shape your understanding of what heaven is really about?

9. How does the promise of Christ's presence help you face suffering, uncertainty, or disappointment today?

Living Today in Light of Tomorrow

10. If your future is secure because of Christ, how should that influence the way you approach your work, relationships, fears, or ambitions this week?

12. The sermon reminded us that every page of Scripture is meant to reveal more of Christ.

- What practices help you move beyond simply reading the Bible to genuinely delighting in Jesus?

Closing Prayer Points

1. Pray for Eyes to See Christ

- Thank Jesus for revealing Himself through His Word.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your love for Christ.
- Pray that you would increasingly behold His beauty rather than merely accumulate knowledge about Him.

2. Rest in the Father's Love

- Thank the Father that His love for you rests on Christ's finished work.
- Confess places where shame, guilt, or insecurity still shape your view of God.
- Ask Him to help you live with the confidence of a beloved child.

3. Grow in Gospel Assurance

- Thank Jesus for standing in your place as your substitute.
- Praise Him that your acceptance before God is based entirely on His righteousness.

4. Long for Christ's Presence

- Thank Jesus for His promise that one day we will be with Him forever.
- Pray for hope that strengthens you in seasons of suffering or discouragement.
- Ask God to help you live today with your eyes fixed on eternity.

5. Reflect Christ in Everyday Life

- Pray that seeing Christ's glory would shape your worship, your relationships, your work, and your witness.
- Ask God to make your life a reflection of His grace and love.
- Pray for opportunities this week to encourage others with the hope of the gospel.

Closing Reflection

Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed for you.

He prayed that you would **see His glory**.

He prayed that you would **know the Father's love**—the very love that has existed between the Father and the Son from all eternity.

And He prayed that one day you would **be with Him forever**.

This is the heart of the gospel: not merely that our sins are forgiven, but that we are welcomed into the life, love, and presence of God through Jesus Christ. Because of His finished work, we can live today with confidence, knowing that the place our story is headed is not uncertainty, but home with Christ.