

LIFE GROUP LESSON

John the Life-Giving Gospel • Week of August 2

Introduction

Just yesterday, riding in the car with our fifteen-year-old who just returned from mission in Ghana West Africa, she spoke up and said, “You know, God is very humble!” *What did she just say?* My mind immediately began processing her statement. I thought *wow, I don’t know if I’ve ever really thought about that.* Soon Philippians 2:5-11 came to mind, and I thought *she’s right, Jesus is God’s Son, God in flesh.* I kept listening as she continued, “God does so much for us we aren’t even aware of, and he just keeps doing for us. All humility is in him, and it’s a fruit of his Spirit because it comes from him.”

Since yesterday afternoon, I keep thinking about her insightful statement, and how it is, in fact, scripturally sound. Jesus – the human embodiment of God – models humility like no one else since the beginning of time. He is the suffering servant foretold in Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12 and repeatedly acknowledges the Father’s glory in everything he does during his time on earth. In his prayer and in earshot of his disciples, Jesus declares: “I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. Now Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began” (John 17:4-5).

Background

We refer to The Lord’s Prayer as the model prayer. It is the prayer Jesus shared with his disciples when they asked him: “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples ...” Jesus said, “This is how you should pray: Father may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. Give us each day the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation” (Luke 11:11b-4). Yet in John, chapter seventeen, just a couple hours before he is arrested in Gethsemane, we find *THE* Lord’s prayer as Jesus prays before the events unfold that will lead to Golgotha.

Having just partaken of Passover, the disciples heard Jesus speak of his love, loving one another, remaining in him (the true vine), and imminent persecution. This was the meal when, “After supper he took another cup of wine and said, ‘This cup is the new covenant between God and his people – an agreement confirmed with my blood which is poured out as a sacrifice for you’” (Luke 22:20; also 1 Corinthians 11:25). With just hours left to live, Jesus humbly prays for his disciples and for all who will ever believe through their message. No one is ex-

empt from dying, and when things get real, what does real love look like?

Read John 17:1-19

- What would you do if you knew the last few hours of your life were in front of you?

Jesus came to this earth with his Father’s mission forefront in his mind. Having been sent into the world to accomplish an assignment only he could accomplish, Jesus prays: “Father the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you” (v1).

- What does Jesus mean by ‘the hour has come’?
- According to this verse, what has been Jesus’ intent all along?

Jesus gives glory back to the Father. He acknowledges his authority comes from the Father and that eternal life is a gift given by the Father. The way to have eternal life is to know the Father *and* the Son:

“And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth” (v3).

Consider

Jesus is the only one sent by God from heaven to earth. Remember John the Baptist had said, “He has come from above and is greater than anyone else. We are of the earth, and we speak of earthly things, but he has come from heaven and is greater than anyone else” (John 3:31). Jesus is the only way to know the Father. Remember his words: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me” (Jn 14:6). Jesus is the only transport between earth and heaven. Remember he said, “I tell you the truth, you will all see heaven open and the angels of God going up and down on the Son of Man, the one who is the stairway between heaven and earth” (John 1:51).

- Jesus acknowledges the Father has “given him authority over everyone” (Jn 17:2). What comfort do you find in the fact that Jesus has authority over all people?

Jesus also acknowledges that suffering precedes glory. He would not fall to the temptation to become ‘king’ without first accomplishing his Father’s mission (see John 6:15). For Jesus, God’s way was the only way. What had Jesus predicted prior to this ‘hour’?

John 3:13-15

John 10:17-18: 36-42

John 12:27-36

- Jesus asked the Father, “Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth” (Jn 17:17). How are we made holy? In what ways have

you found God's Word (revealed truth) to be a purifying agent in your life, your family, your church?

Read John 17:20-26

Jesus prays for his disciples and for all who will ever believe in him through their message (v20). Jesus prays for us! He prays for all who will believe and follow him to stand strong in our faith, for protection, to remain faithful, and to remain connected in our fellowship with the Father and among our brothers and sisters in the faith.

- What does he acknowledge and ask for in vv22-23?

A watching world will know *God has sent Jesus into the world* if we – as his followers – walk in humility and forgiveness daily ... living into perfect unity with God and fellow believers. The cross is both vertical and horizontal. Christ's perfect love, ultimately demonstrated on the cross, casts out all fear because through his death on the cross we are saved and 100% forgiven! Christ prayed: "May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me" (v23). Let this sink in. When we have peace with God in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we will also have peace with one another and the entire ecological created order.

- What does Jesus want, according to v24?

In Closing

Jesus wants his disciples (including us) to be with him where he is. Talk about humility! He does not have to share the joys and wonders of heaven with any of us, and yet, he chooses to! If this resonates with you, shout: "GLORY!" Give him honor and praise for choosing you, for praying for you to know him, for making a way to know him, and for the gift of his very presence within you, empowering you to live into a strong faith. It is only by grace through faith in Christ our Lord that we are saved. This prayer Jesus prayed is still being answered to this very day. Won't you be a part of Jesus' prayer being answered? Let's bow our hearts and give him glory. Ask him to keep you on path. God is very humble and we can be too.

One Year Bible Reading

August 3: 2 Chronicles 33:14-34:33, Romans 16:10-27, Psalm 26:1-12, Prov. 20:19
August 4: 2 Chronicles 35:1-36:23, 1 Corinthians 1:1-17, Ps. 27:1-6, Prov. 20:20-21
August 5: Ezra 1:1-2:70, 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5, Psalm 27:7-14, Proverbs 20:22-23
August 6: Ezra 3:1-4:23, 1 Corinthians 2:6-3:4, Psalm 28:1-9, Proverbs 20:24-25
August 7: Ezra 4:24-6:22, 1 Corinthians 3:5-23, Psalm 29:1-11, Proverbs 20:26-27
August 8: Ezra 7:1-8:20, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21, Psalm 30:1-12, Proverbs 20:28-30
August 9: Ezra 8:21-9:15, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, Psalm 31:1-8, Proverbs 21:1-2



Text: John 17

Power Point:

Revelation may come, but there is depth, breadth and power in prayer.

- 1) Jesus prays for _____.
- 2) Jesus prays for his _____.
 - a) For their _____
 - b) For their _____
 - c) For their _____
 - d) For their _____
 - e) Jesus prayed that _____ would be _____ in Him as he is _____ with the Father— for _____.

PLAIN TRUTH:

What we pray for is the _____ of the future
_____ of God.

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