

Dear Life Group Leaders,

This is a monumentally significant chapter in John's Gospel, indeed, the entire Bible. It's often referred to as Jesus' High Priestly Prayer. Here we see glimpses of the work, plans and purposes of the Trinity, as well as his heart for us. Guaranteed there's too much in these verses for you to cover with your Life Group in one session. So, the pressure is off! Once you've helped your group understand the main point of the passage feel free to focus in on specific verses or themes that you feel would be particularly relevant to your Life Group today (though I wouldn't want to miss the discussions that might be started by questions 6, 7 and 11!). God bless, take care and stay strong,

Andy *(This week's Life Group Guide was prepared by Andy Tuck, who is on the staff team of Everyday Wimbledon)*

## **LIFE GROUP GUIDE**

### **John 17:1-26**

**This week's BIG IDEA:** Jesus prays for himself, his disciples, and for all believers.

#### **Please read John 17:1-5**

1. v1, why might Jesus start this long prayer by praying for himself first?  
*[Leaders note: because the hour has come, and his death on the cross is so imminent. It's the turning point of history and the moment of redemption for all creation.]*
2. v2-3, what is eternal life? What will Jesus death on the cross achieve for us?
3. v4-5, some people say Jesus never claimed to be divine. How might you use this verse to challenge that viewpoint?

#### **Please read John 17:6-19**

4. Break in to smaller groups of 2-3. What does Jesus pray for his disciples? How would you summarise what he prays for? What do these prayers reveal to us about Jesus' heart for those who follow him?  
*[Leaders note: for protection, for their joy, their sanctification, and commission.]*
5. v13, why is Jesus praying all of this in the disciples hearing?  
*[Leaders note: that they would know his delight in God's redemptive work.]*
6. v17, what role does truth play in our lives? Where can we find truth? How do you make sure you're regularly filling your life with God's truth?
7. v18-19, do you recognise God's commission and sanctifying work in your own life?

#### **Please read John 17:20-26**

8. v20, people come to faith in Jesus through our message about him. What is the message? Are you sharing the good news of Jesus with those around you who don't believe? How could we make the most of the opportunity Christmas provides to tell more people about him?
9. v21-23, what does Jesus pray that we would enjoy as his disciples? How can you maintain, develop and advance the unity with other disciples of Jesus? Do you pray for other Christians? Are there Christians from whom you sense you are at a profound distance who are in our own church? In what way can you make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit with them?
10. v22, here Jesus says that he has given his followers "glory". In what ways would thinking about being a Christian as something glorious change your outlook on the Christian life?
11. v24-26, what do these prayers reveal to us about Jesus' heart for those who follow him? What difference does it make to you that Jesus wants to be with you? Again, do you recognise God's commission to you? What difference does it make to know that God is sending you?
12. How should these verses shape our own attitude towards prayer? Do you think of prayer as something burdensome or optional? Or something powerful, beautiful, and which brings you into the presence of God? How is your prayer life? How might these verses inform how you pray?