

Lord, Make Us One

John 17 is considered by many to be the greatest chapter in the Bible. The first five verses are about Jesus' prayer for Himself. Next, Jesus prays for the remaining disciples, praying for their role in spreading the gospel. Finally, beginning in v. 20, this is Jesus' prayer for the church .. for all who hear and believe ... and then spread the gospel themselves. Will we see through the eyes of Jesus as we think of His body of believers and God's gift of unity?

I. What Jesus is NOT Praying For in John 17:21:

- A. Ecumenicalism, which ignores the context and theology of Jesus' prayer.
- B. Uniformity. Form, procedure or other external religious practices is not in view here.

II. What is on Jesus' Heart?

A. The Nature of Unity

1. 17.21a - *May they all be **one**, as you, Father, are in in me and I am in you.* He is praying for the type of unity that exists between the Father & the Son.
2. 17.21b - *may they also be in **us**.* Why? *So that the **world** may believe that you sent me.*
3. 17.26 - *the love you have loved me with may be **in** them* - One in holiness & profound affection.

B. Unity is a Product of a Greater Mission

1. A spirit of unity that forms around purity, holiness, and in what honors each other.
2. Unity is not the aim ... it is the product of our loving God and leading righteous lives.
3. 17.16-17 - This is what Jesus prayed for the disciples...
 - a) 17.16 - *They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.* You are set apart ...
 - b) 17.17 - *Sanctify them by the truth; your **word** is truth.*
 - (1) Who sanctifies? The Word. i.e., the *logos*... Jesus is the *logos*? John 1.1 ...
 - c) 17.19 - He set himself apart so that we would be set apart **by Him**.
4. Now connect this to His prayer in 17.20-21 ... His is a prayer for consistency.

C. The Power to be One

1. 17.22 - *I have given them the **glory** you have given me, so that they may be one as we are one.* You have been given glory. God has taken up residence in your heart.
2. God lives in you. 17.23a - *I am in them and you are in me, so that they be ...completely one.*
3. 17.23b - *so that the world may know you have **sent me** and have loved them as you have loved me.*

III. Jesus' Prayer for Fellowship

- A. John 17:24a: *Father, I want those you have given me to be with me **where** I am, ... Why?*
- B. John 17:24b *...so that they will **see** my glory, which you have given me because you loved me....*
- C. 17.25-26 - Here Jesus exhibits faith and confidence in the Father granting His requests.

IV. As We Close...

A. Unity is a Gift ... Not a Product

1. Looking primarily at externals ... form and practice ...is not the Biblical model.
2. May we come to see with the eyes of Jesus ... not with our human preferences.

B. We Must Maintain the Unity We Have Been Given

1. Ephesians 4. 2: What qualities maintain unity?

C. Unity Takes the First Step

1. Ephesians 4:3: *making **every effort** to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
2. We make every effort to engage; ...not put up walls and burn bridges.