

Logan Reynolds  
First Belton  
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Series: Power of Moments  
Title: The Heart of Jesus  
Text: John 17; 10:27-29

Have you ever wished you could be a fly on the wall? There have been so many moments that I wish I could have been a fly on the wall to hear, see, or experience a powerful moment that I can only read about today.

- Jesse Owens as he steps out on the track in the 1936 Olympics
- Babe Ruth as he calls his shot in the 1932 World Series
- Sit in the stands as Michael Jordan leads the Bulls to a 1997 NBA Finals Championship
- Hear the crowd roar as Tiger Woods wins the 1997 Masters
- Listen in on Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* in 1863
- Stand in the crowd as Martin Luther King Jr. gave his *I Have a Dream* speech in 1963
- Sit in the room as Admiral Nimitz put together the plan that defeated our enemies in Pacific Theater of World War 2

What about you? Are there any moments that you wished you could have been a fly on the wall to experience?

This morning, we are going to look at one of the most significant passages in all the Bible and one of the coolest things is that we get to be a fly on the wall to listen in as Jesus prays to the Father in his final moments on earth.

Pick up with me in John 17.

*“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ in whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”*

For Jesus, this marks the true turning point of the events to come. He says, “the hour has come,” meaning it is time for him to return to the Father, but he knows the only way back to the Father is through the cross. So, this is Jesus agreeing with the Father that he has completed all that the Father had given him to do and now, requests that the Father be glorified as he submits himself to his will by taking on the shame of the cross and the glory of resurrection.

What this shows us is that Jesus' primary motive in life was to glorify God as he lived for him and trusted his plan and timing of events. Jesus lived to glorify and please his Father.

This is a great reminder that while we have many jobs on this earth as husband and wife, father and mother, grandma and grandpa, son and daughter, employee and employer, our primary purpose is to glorify God in all that we do and trust his plan and timing for all things.

There is also something that may be easily missed if you were just reading through this prayer. In v. 2, Jesus says that he has given eternal life to his followers. In v. 3, he defines eternal life in this way, *"And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ in whom you have sent."*

This is important – Jesus' desire is that we would experience eternal life, and eternal life is not a merely a place but a being – eternal life, as Jesus defines it is knowing God. To know God is to know him in relationship. It is more than knowing about him, it is knowing him in experience and the tense of this word, "to know," is a present active kind of knowing in that we are always growing in our relationship with the Father. Meaning, this eternal life that Jesus is speaking of is not a static but a dynamic relationship with the Father.

We have talked about this before, but there is a danger, if we are not careful, to fall into the trap of thinking that we are "right with God" but miss out on growing in God. This is the overarching context for how Jesus continues to pray for his disciples in v. 8.

He writes, *"For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."* This is Jesus defining who is "in" and who is "out." Those who are "in" are those who have received the word of God and have believed that Jesus is not just a good teacher, but the savior of the world and more specifically, their savior. As such, Jesus says in v. 9, *"I am praying for them (those who have received Christ). I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them."*

Okay, look right at me – the beauty of what Jesus is praying for here is that those who have received Jesus are those whom God has taken possession of and will never let go. Jesus is reiterating the declarative statement he made to the disciples in John 10:27, *"My sheep (are those who) hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life (a growing and dynamic relationship to the Father) and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of*

*my hand. My father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."*

What a promise!

Now, as Jesus leaves, he prays four things over his disciples. He asks God...

**To protect them.** In v. 12 and 15, Jesus prays, *"While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."* In v. 15, he goes on to say, *"I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one."*

Knowing life apart from him will be difficult, Jesus asks the Father to guard, keep, and protect those who are in his hand.

He asks God to **fulfill them.** In v. 13, *"But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."* Jesus is speaking his joy over his followers requesting they be filled with his joy. To be "filled" is to be filled to the brim. Not that life is going to be easy, he has just said it will be difficult, but that even in difficulty we would be filled with a life-altering, never ceasing kind of joy despite our trials and tribulations.

He asks God to **transform them.** In v. 16 he prays, *"they are not of this world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."* Jesus gives us a hint as to what he means by being "sanctified." It is to be set apart, to be different than the rest of the world. Jesus is speaking of our transformation. As we talked a few weeks ago, God's intent for us is that the life of the vine would be in the life of the branch. Because we are in relationship with the Father, we ought to look more and more like the Son.

Finally, he asks God to **send them** to the broken world around them. In v. 18 he prays, *"As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."* This is a powerful statement, as the Father sent Jesus into the world to die so they world might come to know and follow him, so too, does Jesus send his followers into the world to sacrifice their lives so the world might come to know and follow him. A disciple's purpose on earth is to glorify God, but their mission is to help all people come to know and follow Jesus.

After Jesus prays for his current disciples, he then makes a transition to pray for all disciples. Here is what I mean, look in v. 20. He says, *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.”*

Who is Jesus talking about? Those who will believe because of the testimony of his disciples. He is speaking largely to the entire body of Christ both local and global for all generations of time. For all disciples, Jesus prays 3 things...

He asks the Father...

To **unify them** as one. In v. 21 he prays, *“that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”* He continues, *“the glory that you have given me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and love them even as you loved me.”*

What is close to the heart of Jesus is the same thing that is close to the heart of a mother or a father, that all their children get along. It is not that Jesus is praying for uniformity. He is not praying that we will all be the same, no he knows that we are not the same (in fact, he created us to be different) but that we would be unified in what we do have in common – him.

The unifying cord between his followers is that we have been purchased by his blood, adopted into his family, and given a new purpose and a common mission.

Did you catch why our universal unity is so important? Unity is a witness to the world of the gospel.

One of the most significant moments in Christian history was the council of Nicaea in 325AD. While not perfect, it was the first of its kind as Christians gathered together to establish Christian doctrine and to write the Nicene Creed, a document that affirmed orthodox belief.

It was a line in the sand, so to speak, to say that while we may not agree on everything, this is what we must agree on.

Sadly, while we have had these moments in time where Christians have come together in unity, we have had far too many where we have allowed our differences to cast a negative shadow over our witness to the world.

Listen, the way that we treat one another as universal Christians has an eternal significance. In many ways, heaven and hell weigh in the balance by the way we treat one another which is probably why Jesus asks the Father to keep us together and to keep us unified. As Jesus says in v. 26, may we love one another as Christ has loved us.

Finally, he asks the father to **bring us home**. In v. 24, he prays, *“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”*

Jesus’s desire is that when all this is finished, we will be with him forever. I don’t know about you, but I find great encouragement that one, Jesus wants me to be with him forever and two, that one day, I will get to see him in all his glory for all eternity.

The theme of the last several weeks remains, no one will ever love us like Jesus. When our time on earth is complete, his faithful hand will carry us home.