

**John 17:1** These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

**John 17:2** As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

**John 17:3** And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

**John 17:4** I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

**John 17:5** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

This chapter is a chapter of prayer, and is one of my favorite chapters in scripture. Jesus is talking with His Father with His eyes raised to heaven. First, He acknowledges that the time has come (as determined by God) to fulfill the purpose for His coming.

“Glorify thy Son” – I think this phrase is a prayer of faith regarding the resurrection, the defining proof of all the claims He has made about Himself. He knows that by fulfilling this purpose He will bring glory to the Father. By His obedience, God has granted Him the authority to determine the destiny of (judge) all flesh (mankind / human beings); He has the authority to provide eternal life for those whom the Father has given Him (those who believe in Him and accept Him as the way to salvation). Then He clarifies what He means by eternal life—knowing the one true God and Jesus Christ (who was sent by God).

In this verse I think knowing reflects the most intimate of relationships that comes from fellowship--sharing time together and learning all you can about the person of your focus and attention. He is rightfully pleased to know that His obedience has and will glorify the Father. What was the work the Father gave Jesus to do? Providing for the salvation of man by living a sinless life and being obedient to the Father by enduring the cross. He is also eager to return to the position of glory that was His before the world ever began—to the side of His Father.

**John 17:6** I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

**John 17:7** Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

**John 17:8** For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Jesus shifts the focus of His prayer to His disciples. He is telling His Father (not because He does not know already – but I think the human part of Him is going through the process of why He must endure what is to come) how He has taught the disciples about Him (the Father).

Truth is that there is nothing we can tell God in prayer that He doesn't already know. He knows what we are going to say before we ever utter a word.

*Psalms 139:4 "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether."*

*Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

I think the privilege of prayer is for our benefit in establishing and maintaining an intimate relationship with our Father in heaven. When you love someone, you desire to spend time in fellowship with him. Prayer was the Savior's special time of fellowship with His Father during His human experience that kept Him focused on His mission and empowered Him to succeed where the first Adam had failed. Prayer is also a means that the Lord uses to grow our faith as we experience His provision and protection in answer to our prayers. Through prayer the Lord also allows us the privilege of having a part in accomplishing His purposes on planet earth.

Jesus recognizes His disciples as special gifts from His Father and is pleased that they have been faithful and obedient. They understand that God is the giver of all things (truth, miraculous power, etc.) because they believed what Jesus taught them and showed them through His miracles. They believe without doubt that Jesus was sent from YHWH, the God of Israel, and that everything He told them was from God.

**John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.**

**John 17:10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.**

Jesus emphasizes that He is praying for these disciples that His Father has given Him—not the rest of the world. He emphasizes that because they follow the Son they belong to the Father, and because they belong to the Father they belong to Jesus as well. They have brought and will bring Him glory through their obedience and faithfulness.

**John 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.**

**John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.**

Jesus is leaving the world to go home to His Father, but the disciples have to stay. Now He asks His Father to protect them through the power of His name. His prayer/desire is that they will function as one in harmony with one another—the same relationship enjoyed by God the Father and Jesus the Son.

Jesus talks about how He was able to keep them all together as a team of faithful disciples during His time of ministry on the earth. Then He makes note of the fact that in the end one was lost (Judas Iscariot) in fulfillment of the scriptures.

*Psalm 41:9 "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."*

In my study of prophecy, I have learned that the phrase "son of perdition" is only used in reference to Judas and Antichrist (see journal on Revelation 17). My hypothesis is that Judas was the first person that Satan himself chose to indwell on planet earth and the Antichrist will be the second.

**John 17:13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.**

Jesus is ready to come home, but He has shared enough with them (His disciples) to enable them to experience "my joy" within them. It just jumped out at me that He is saying that they / we can have that perfect joy **while here on earth**. We know that the joy of Jesus would be perfect joy. (See notes on John 15:10-11.)

**John 17:14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

**John 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.**

**John 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

They know the word (the teachings) of God, and they have already begun to experience hate from the world because it is obvious that they are no longer "in tune" with the world. They don't fit in any better than Jesus does. They are strangers on a pilgrimage waiting to go home. He is not praying for God to bring them on home; their ministry is necessary to bring many into the kingdom (verse 20). But based on the next verse, it would seem that He also knew their need for a time of sanctification—being made holy (cf 15:1-3).

His prayer for them is for protection from evil. Their faith has made them citizens of a heavenly kingdom—just like Jesus.

**John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**

**John 17:18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.**

**John 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.**

Jesus asks that they be made holy / purified through the truth of His word. He is sending them into the world just as He was sent into the world. Jesus has sanctified Himself in order to be able to sanctify them. How is that sanctification accomplished? Through obedience to the Father through the power of the Spirit.

*1Peter 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."*

Sanctify = to make holy, purify, consecrate, set apart  
The obedience of the disciples to live by the commands of the Word (Christ) would set them apart from the world just as surely as Jesus's obedience to the Father set Him apart.

**John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;**

**John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**

Jesus now expands His prayer to include all those who will come to believe in Him through the testimony and preaching of His disciples. He prays that they will also be unified in spirit as another proof that Jesus is the Son of God—the Messiah. The only way that kind of unity ("one in us") is possible is through the work of God, the "three in one," through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The importance of the unity of the body of believers has basically been ignored throughout church history. No wonder Satan has been so successful with his deceptions. Fractions in the body began occurring as early as the time of Paul regarding the acceptable practices for Gentiles who became part of the body. These fractions have continued to multiply, especially since the Reformation and even more so in the last 100 years. Jesus declared that unity among believers is one of the primary proofs to the world that He is the Son of God. I believe the lack of unity is connected to the sin of the Pharisees. People get caught up in their own positions of influence regardless of the impact on others or whether they are adhering to the truth of God's word. One of my great struggles is how so many "learned" men who supposedly love the Lord and are taught by the same Holy Spirit can come to so many different conclusions of the "truth." I know that God holds me accountable as an individual and have decided that I will trust the Spirit to teach me the truth. I may study the teachings of others, but I will only accept as true that which the Spirit shows me personally through the Word of God. This should be the litmus test for all teaching of scripture.

*Acts 17:11 "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

**John 17:22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:**

**John 17:23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.**

Just as God the Father put His Son in a position of glory (praise, honor, approval) by sending the Son as His representative / ambassador, Jesus is sending His followers out with the same position of glory. His desire from the beginning is to have them unified and committed in their obedience to Him just as He was totally committed in obedience to God the Father. He would dwell in them (through the Spirit) just as God dwelled in Him to enable Him to be successful and victorious in His mission. This unity and obedience would be proof to the world that God the Father sent Jesus the Son. It would also be a proof of the Father's love for them in the same way He loved His Son.

I just happened to be reading The Jesus Style by Gayle Erwin and ran across a statement that made me think. "But living unity is coming because the Father answers the prayers of Jesus." I had just worked on this section in John and it flashed in my mind that Jesus is still waiting for one of His prayers to be answered. The answer is sure to come—but in the Father's timing. It certainly puts our / my impatience in perspective when I think about "waiting on God's timing" regarding my prayers.

**John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.**

Jesus is eager for His followers to be with Him in heaven. He wants them to experience the glory of His presence, a gift from the Father—an expression of His love before the foundation of the world.

**John 17:25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.**

**John 17:26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.**

Jesus is addressing His Father. First, He says that the world does not know Him (the Father). Then He says that just as He (Jesus) knows His Father, His disciples knew that Jesus had been sent by the Father. Jesus had been faithful to declare the truth of God the Father and would continue to declare it. When He says He will continue to make the Father known, I think He is referencing what will be done by the empowered witness / preaching of His disciples through the Holy Spirit. His whole motive is to fill them with the love of God.

As I have continued to grow in my prayer life, I've come to a real position of peace and confidence regarding God's working in my own life and the lives of those I love. He knows my heart. I also recognize that my desires—though good in my eyes—might not be what are best from God's perspective. I have learned to just lift up to Him those I love and for whom I am burdened with thankfulness and confidence that His provision will be best both for the person and the glory of God. When praying for the lost, I pray for opportunity to share the truth with them or that the Lord will bring someone into their lives who will be a more effective witness for that person. I also pray that He will do whatever it takes to bring them to their knees in repentance and faith.

As I look at Jesus' prayer, five things stand out to me.

- 1) Jesus didn't lose one of the disciples given to Him except for Judas Iscariot, which was a fulfillment of scripture. I see this as another affirmation of the security of the believer. The true believer is one who continues in the faith; John affirms this truth in 1John 2:19: *"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."*
- 2) Unity among His followers was a great desire of the Lord. He mentions that desire three times—verses 11, 21 & 22. What a sad thought to me that the body of believers is so divided in this world. Our priority should be to do our part to promote unity in the body through the leading of the Spirit. The Spirit knows the mind of God and will lead us accordingly.

*1 Corinthians 2:11 "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."*

That leading will not be divisive, but will promote unity. I believe that division in the body of believers is primarily a result of pride and/or lack of submission to the teaching of the Spirit. The unity of the body is supposed to be one of the main ways that the world comes to belief in Jesus as the Son of God (v21).

I think it is important to understand that such unity is only possible on the basis of shared belief in the essential doctrines of the faith that are indisputable. In those beliefs that are subject to dispute, love for the LORD and the desire to share the gospel should take precedence over our differences.

- 3) Jesus was concerned that His followers be protected from the attack of the enemy and his forces. Apparently, this prayer for protection strengthens the net of protection around each child of God. We know that the enemy can attack physically, mentally, materially, etc. This prayer doesn't ensure that evil things won't occur to the believer; it protects the believer from becoming spiritually defeated by the circumstances. Instead, the result will be victory through faith.
- 4) Jesus prayed for His followers to be purified through the Word (v17). That can only happen as they are drawn to the Word by the Spirit with a desire to know the will and wisdom of the Father.
- 5) Jesus is eager to have His followers with Him in glory (v24). Oh that it were today!

In the next chapter we will find Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane. As I reflect back, it seems that John has given us quite an account of the time from the last supper until He arrives at the Garden. So many important truths were presented to the disciples. I also get the impression that His prayer to the Father was audible as they walked towards the garden, because the next words we read are: *"When Jesus had spoken these words."*