

Sermon Discussion

27 June 2021

Read John 17:1-26

Dig Deeper

Though this prayer is often labeled as Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer," that name is a bit misleading. Jesus had not yet entered into His high priestly ministry, which He began when He ascended into heaven. However, this prayer, represents a foretaste of that **intercessory ministry**.

Jesus proceeded to define the nature of eternal life. Eternal life is essentially knowing (*Greek "ginoskosin"*) God experientially through faith in His Son (see John 3:5; Jeremiah 31:34; Habakkuk 2:14; Hebrews 8:11). Jesus described it in terms of relationship rather than duration. Everyone will live forever somewhere. However, the term "**eternal life**" as Jesus used it means much more than long life.

The title "**Holy Father**" appears only here in the fourth Gospel and is a reminder of both aspects of God's nature. It balances God's ultimate purity with His intimate paternity and prepares us for the need for loving sanctification. The reason Jesus and disciples can be holy is that the Father is holy.

In v. 21, Jesus was not speaking about **denominational unity but personal unity** among genuine believers. He was praying that all true believers would be one in their love for one another, their submission to the authority of Scripture, and their commitment to their mission. This verse is a favorite of promoters of the ecumenical movement. Nevertheless, the solution to this problem is not to force uniformity.

1. In v. 1, we see that Jesus "lifted his eyes up to heaven" and prayed. This speaks to His posture...or how He chooses a posture that helps Him focus on God. What can you learn from this?
2. What do you think v. 6 means when it describes the disciples as "yours"? Why would these men belong to God and be given over to Jesus? How had the disciples obeyed God's word?
3. Jesus returns to the theme of joy in v. 13. Why do you think He is talking so much about joy in these few chapters (*see John 15:11; 16:20-24*)?
4. Read v. 26. What do you think it means to have the love that God the Father has for Jesus in us? Is this something that God wants us to experience on a daily basis? How does this happen and how might this impact our daily lives?

Application & Prayer

- Give some thought to the changes that might need to be made in your life in order for Jesus' prayer of truth and unity to be true in your life. Perhaps there are brothers and sisters in Christ that you need to stop criticizing. If so, how will you demonstrate unity with them moving forward?
- Since Jesus took the time to pray over His disciples, how important is it that we take the time to pray over those that we love? Spend at least 5 full minutes praying for a specific family member or friend.
- Meditate on this: *"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."* Matthew 6:9-13