

Oneness in Christ; Lesson #3 “That They All May Be One”

Memory Verse John 17:1-26

John 17:20, 21, (NKJV) “ *I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me’* ”.

John Knox called this chapter the Holy Of Holies in Scripture. When he was dying, he asked his wife to read from John 17, the passage instrumental in his conversion many years earlier, saying, “There I cast my first anchor.” She continued to read the chapter to him until he died.

This is the longest prayer recorded in the New Testament, 632 words.

It was offered on the most solemn occasion that has ever occurred.

This prayer is a specimen of the manner of His intercession.

Where was the prayer?

John 14:31 (NKJV) *Arise, let us go from here.*

In company with His disciples, the Saviour slowly made His way to the garden of Gethsemane. {DA 685.1}

John 18:1 (NKJV) *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, ...*

Read John 17:1-26

Firstly, Jesus prays for Himself (John 17:1–5),

Secondly, for His disciples (John 17:6–19),

Thirdly, for those who would later believe in Him (John 17:20–26).

This was the same order of the High priest. He would wash and change his clothes, pray for himself, the sons of Aaron, the people.

Jesus Prays For Himself

This is the real Lord’s prayer.

John 17:1–5 (NKJV) *Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.*

³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

The Decisive Hour

John 2:4 (NKJV) *Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”*

John 7:8 (NKJV) *You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.”*

***John 7:30 (NKJV)** *Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.*

John 8:20 *These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.*

John 13:1 *Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

Matthew 26:45 (NKJV) *Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.*

Mark 14:41 (NKJV) *Then He came the third time and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.*

Matthew 12:40 (NKJV) *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

What does it mean to know God?

Jeremiah 31:33–34 (NKJV) *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord.’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”*

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV) *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

Hosea 4:6 (NKJV) *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me;*

Jesus Prays For His Disciples

[1.] That they might be kept (John 17:11-16).

[2.] That they might be sanctified (John 17:17-19).

[3.] That they might be united (John 17:11 and Joh_17:20-23).

[4.] That they might be glorified (John 17:24-26).

Luke 6:12–13 (NKJV) *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:*

John 17:9–19 (NKJV) *“I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

***Matthew 11:25** (NKJV) *At that time Jesus answered and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.*

“For Those Who Will Believe in Me”

Acts 2:1 (NKJV) *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

John 17:20–26 (NKJV) *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. ²⁴ “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may*

be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. ²⁶ And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Mark 16:15 (NKJV) *And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”*

Luke 13:29 (NKJV) *They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.*

Unity Among Christians

Acts 15:6 (NKJV) *Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.*

Mark 9:38–41 (NKJV) *Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.” ³⁹ But Jesus said, “Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰ For he who is not against us is on our side. ⁴¹ For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.*

***John 13:35** (NKJV) *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

John 10:16 (NKJV) *And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.*

In this last meeting with His disciples, the great desire which Christ expressed for them was that they might love one another as He had loved them. Again and again He spoke of this. "These things I command you," He said repeatedly, "that ye love one another." His very first injunction when alone with them in the upper chamber was, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." {DA 680.4}

Truth Must Be the Foundation For Christian Unity

John 17:17–19 (NKJV) *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

John 17:22–23 (NKJV) *And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

"We cannot purchase peace and unity by sacrificing the truth. The conflict may be long and painful, but at any cost we must hold fast to the Word of God" EGW (Historical Sketches 197).

Through the Holy Spirit, Christ will open more clearly to those who will believe on him that which he has inspired holy men to write concerning the truth. And it is thus that the unity for which Christ prayed is to be effected. We are to receive sanctification through obedience to the word and the Spirit of truth.

We cannot surrender the truth in order to accomplish this union; for the very means by which it is to be gained is sanctification through the truth. Human wisdom would change all this, thinking this basis of union too narrow. Men would effect a union through conformity to popular opinions, through a compromise with the world. But truth is God's basis for the unity of his people. {Gospel Workers 92 391

Amos 3:3 (NKJV) *Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?*

The secret of our success in the work of God will be found in the harmonious working of our people. There must be concentrated action. Every member of the body of Christ must act his part in the cause of God, according to the ability that God has given him. We must press together against obstructions and difficulties, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart.-- Review and Herald, Dec. 2, 1890. {ChS 75.1}

If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world. -- Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 221. {ChS 75.2}

"To remain divided is sinful! Did not our Lord pray, that they may be one, even as we are one"? (John 17:22). A chorus of ecumenical voices keep harping the unity tune. What they are saying is, "Christians of all doctrinal shades and beliefs must come together in one visible organization, regardless... Unite, unite!" Such teaching is false, reckless and dangerous. Truth alone must determine our alignments. Truth comes before unity. Unity without truth is hazardous. - Charles Spurgeon