

“The High Priestly Prayer Of Christ (Part II)”

John 17:20-26

Message by Michael J. Barnard

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Teaching Aim: To examine the concluding petitions of Jesus in His High Priestly prayer on the night before His crucifixion. To realize Jesus prayed in three specific areas: for Himself (**vv. 1-5**); for His disciples (**vv. 6-19**); and for all future believers (**vv. 20-26**). To understand it is the desire of Jesus to see the one true Church united in Him just as He and the Father are One.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The importance of prayer and the High Priestly prayer of Christ (John 17:17-19)

1. What does the word “*sanctification*” mean? (See Dictionary) When does the sanctification process begin and when does it end? R.C. Sproul wrote, “*Our sanctification comes from the Word of God and from the truth that is poured into our souls, truth that renews our minds, renews our thinking, and renews our lives.*” What is “*truth*” according to Jesus in **verse 17**? (Also see **John 14:6**) What do we learn from **Rom. 12:1-2** about the importance of renewing our minds? What are some things that you are doing to renew your mind?

2. What can we learn about the mission of the disciples of Christ from **verse 18**? Note: We may long for heaven, but it is on earth where the work needs to be done. If there is one thing that we can’t do in heaven, it is to evangelize those who are on the earth. What are some ways that you are trying to evangelize family, friends, and your community for Christ?

3. Why in the world would Jesus have to sanctify Himself (**vs. 19**)? Jesus set Himself apart to fulfill His Father’s will and that would include dying on the cross in just a matter of hours. According to **verse 19b**, what was the purpose behind this sanctification? Note: Christ’s death on the cross would sanctify His people for the work that God has called them to do on earth. It is the blood of Christ that makes us holy and sets us apart for service to God.

4. If we want to be used effectively by God on earth, we will have to spend quality time with Him in His Word (the Bible). On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your daily quiet time with God? If spending time with God in His Word and prayer sanctifies us in His truth, what are some ways that you could improve your daily time with God? D.L. Moody said, “*This book [the Bible] will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this book.*” What did Moody mean? How has reading the Bible changed your life? Have you read the entire Bible?

Part II: Jesus prays for those who will believe in Him (John 17:20-23)

1. All of **chapter 17** is the High Priestly prayer of Christ. Up until this point, Jesus had prayed for Himself and His disciples. Who does Jesus begin praying for in **verse 20**? How does it feel to know that Jesus prayed for you specifically just hours before His crucifixion?
2. According to **verse 21**, what was the essence of this prayer? Unity has been a central theme throughout the Gospel of John. (See **John 10:15-16**) Was Jesus praying that all Christians would be united, no matter what they believe? What was Jesus really praying? What did Jesus warn His followers to watch out for? (See **Matt. 7:15**) How can we identify these false teachers today? (See **Matt. 7:16-20**) Why is it important for every Christian to hold to the teaching, *"The Scriptures and the Scriptures alone are the authority for what we believe?"*
3. The true church is made up of believers from all ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. What did Warren Wiersbe mean when he wrote, *"Christian harmony is not based on the externals of the flesh but the internals and eternal of the Spirit in the inner person. We must look beyond the elements of our first birth – race, color, abilities, etc. – and build our fellowship on the essentials of our new birth?"* Have you ever been in a place, where suddenly, people were prejudiced against you because of the color of your skin? How did it feel?
4. Edwin A. Blum wrote, *"Jesus was not praying for the unity of a single, worldwide, ecumenical church in which doctrinal heresy would be maintained along with orthodoxy. Instead, He was praying for a unity of love, a unity of obedience to God and His Word, and a united commitment to His will."* What are some ways that our church can better spread this kind of love and unity to our community today?
5. The Father and the Son always work together in perfect unity. How do we see this unity at work in **John 5:30** and **John 8:28-30**? In **verse 22**, Jesus prayed for His people to be one, just as He and the Father are one. To be one with God and each other, we must be *"in union with Christ."* How do we see the importance of this union portrayed in **John 15:1-5**? According to **John 15:5**, what is the secret to bearing much fruit?

6. How would you define the word “*glory*?” (See Dictionary) What are some ways that the glory of God is manifested to us today? What did John Piper mean when he said, “*God’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy His glory forever?*” Why is it not a vain thing for God to glorify God? Who is the ultimate good in heaven and on earth? How will born-again Christians ultimately enjoy the glory of God?

7. Jonathan Edwards wrote, “*God is glorified by our being satisfied in him. This means that God’s radical God-centeredness and our passion for ultimate satisfaction cannot be in tension, but come to fulfillment in the continual act of worshipful rejoicing in God.*” How does our satisfaction in God bring glory to God? According to Edwards, what is the best way for our satisfaction in God to be demonstrated?

8. According to **verse 23**, what message is sent to the world through the love and unity of the church? Jesus emphasized the importance of unity among His followers and the ultimate example of unity in the Bible is that is found within the Holy Trinity. In **verses 22 & 23** we specifically see the relationship between the Father and the Son at work. How is our unity and identification with Christ dramatically demonstrated through the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper?

Part III: It is the prayer of Jesus that His people will be with Him and behold His glory (John 17:24-26)

1. A last will and testament of Jesus Christ is found in **verse 24**. What does Jesus “*will*” in this verse. Reread the verse to see just how important it is. Jesus was praying that, at the moment of your death, you will be with Him in heaven to behold His glory. William MacDonald writes, “*The Son desires to have His people with Himself in glory. Every time a believer dies, it is, in a sense, an answer to this prayer. If we realized this, it would be a comfort to us in our sorrow. To die is to go to be with Christ and to behold His glory.*” Why should understanding **verse 24** be a comfort to every born-again believer? Note: When Jesus prays, you can be sure the Father listens and will answer His request.

2. Most of us are currently considered citizens of the United States. What can we learn about our true citizenship from **Phil. 3:20-21**? What are some of the major misunderstandings Christians have today about the glorified body of Christ? In what way will our glorified bodies be like Jesus?

3. Charles Spurgeon wrote, *“The diseases caused by sickness and age will be unknown among glorified believers, for they will be as the angels of God. No one will enter into glory lame, maimed, frail, or deformed. No one will be blind or deaf. There will be no paralysis or wasting away from tuberculosis. We will possess everlasting youth. The body that is sown in weakness will be raised in power and will immediately obey the commands of its Lord.”* What can we learn about our resurrected bodies from Charles Spurgeon? (Also see **Rev. 21:1-5**)

4. **Verse 25** is the only time the phrase *“righteous Father”* is used in the Bible. What does the word *“righteous”* mean? (See Dictionary) Christ-followers are now the adopted children of God *“in Christ.”* What incredible truths can we learn from **1 John 3:1-3**? Why do you think so many people reject Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord today? (See **2 Cor. 4:3-4**)

5. The question is often asked, *“How can a loving God send innocent people who have never heard the name of Christ to hell?”* 1. Is anyone innocent? 2. Does God send innocent people to hell? What is *“natural revelation?”* (Hint: Search online) How do we see natural revelation at work in **Psa. 19:1-4**? What can we learn from **Rom. 3:10-12, 23** about every human being? Note: It is important to understand, God doesn’t send anyone to hell, people send themselves to hell by rejecting God. People go to hell because they willingly choose to reject God and thus reap the eternal consequences of their choice.

6. It is amazing that God offers us salvation in Jesus Christ. What is the essence of the prayer of Jesus in **verse 26**? Until Jesus returns, God is allowing us to participate right now in Christ’s glory spiritually. (See **2 Cor. 3:18**) What are some ways that you can glorify God through the way you live your life today?

7. Today, every born-again believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit from the moment of regeneration (or new-birth). William MacDonald wrote, *“They saw in Christ a perfect expression of the Father, Jesus has continued to declare the Father’s Name through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Ever since the day of Pentecost, the Spirit has been teaching believers about God the Father. Especially through the Word of God, we can know what God is like.”* What are some ways that God’s indwelling Holy Spirit has changed your life? How are you reflecting the love of God to others? Are others able to see new life in you?

MINER'S CORNER ~ Manna to live by!

- Jesus prayed that the true church would be one in unity, just as He and the Father are one.
- Jesus lost none of His disciples except for Judas who never was a true believer.
- Jesus prayed that His disciples would be sanctified (meaning set apart) in God's truth; and then He clarified that God's Word is truth.
- Unity among true believers has an evangelistic element to it as God uses it to draw unbelievers to Himself.
- In **John 17:24**, Jesus prayed that all true believers would one day be joined together with Him in heaven and see His glory.
- The prayer of Jesus in **verse 24** is answered instantaneously at the moment of our death.
- John Piper wrote, *"God's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy His glory forever."*
- The Westminster Shorter Catechism question 1 asks, *"What is the chief end of man?"* The answer is, *"Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."*