

## Jesus Prays

### A “Small” Vision of Jesus’ work?

How do we understand Jesus’ earthly life and death? The point in time when Jesus made it possible for us to be God’s friends and go to heaven when we die?

The vision of this prayer is infinitely larger. It is about what God has done to make humans included in the eternal fellowship of the Father Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus’ prayer in John 17 brings together all his teaching in the previous 4 chapters. It clearly divides into a prayer for himself, for his immediate disciples and for those who would believe because of their continuing in the work the Father gave the Son to do.

### Prays for himself

#### Central prayer – to be glorified SO THAT the Father is glorified

Moses had asked to see God’s glory (Exodus 33:18). i.e. to see God as he actually is.

Jesus asks

- a) to be glorified.
- b) so that he might glorify his Father. (17:1)
- a) He does so by dying and so revealing God as gracious and merciful. His hour had come. (cf John 2:4; 12:23).
  - a. The effect of that is that he has authority to give life. Not simply, immortality but to KNOW the Father and the Son (17:3). Jesus glorified his Father by doing the work the Father had given him to do. (17:4) That is, he had revealed the Father as he is, unveiled, brought near and in reality. If we know Jesus, we know the Father (14:9)
  - b. The cross is an exercise of authority over all flesh (17:2) He has the authority to include those to whom he has given life in the loving fellowship of the trinity. *“you have loved them even as you have loved me”* (17:23)
- b) This glorification of Jesus is in his Father’s presence. (17:5) John’s emphasis is on the unbroken unity of the Father and Son (and Holy Spirit). There is no *“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me”* speech in John’s gospel. There is only unity. Unity of purpose and unity of love. This involves God’s self-revelation and the giving of life to all who the Father gave to the Son. (17:2)

### Prayer for those left in the “enemy” camp – his immediate disciples.

**Central prayer – that they be kept safe by the Father so they can continue revealing Jesus and doing the Father’s work in the “enemy” camp.**

The disciples were not to be spies, saboteurs, fifth columnists or isolationists.

They are the in the world. (17:11) as Jesus had been. They are not of the world like Jesus. (17:14) They are hated by the world. (17:14) All of this is because they have changed sides and joined the mission of the Father and the Son.

- a. Father gave them to the Son (v2) God is sovereign
- b. They obeyed v6
  - They recognized the source of all Jesus gave. v7
    - 1. Jesus’ words v8

i.e. all was from the Father

**So how are they to be protected**, “kept in the Father’s name” (17:11) and maintained in a unity that reflects the unity of the Father and the Son? (17:11). While Jesus was with them, he had guarded them. (17:12) and “kept them in the Father’s name” (17:12). To be kept in the Father’s name is to be a consistent representative of the Father. A state enabled by his power.

### **What keeps them safe?**

Jesus asked that they be sanctified in the truth. (17:17)

“sanctified” – be made holy (ie saints) – that is, be in the presence of God.

“by the truth” – truth?? –

- a) knowing what reality is.
- b) knowing THE truth – Jesus

The disciples would be protected by knowing Jesus and being involved in his mission.

Jesus sanctifies himself first so that the disciples can be sanctified in truth.

### **Believers who become believers because of the word of the disciples**

As the disciples are enabled by the Spirit to know all truth (16:13) they will be involved in revealing Jesus and continuing his ministry. This means that there will be an ongoing chain of believers. (17:20). What does Jesus want for them?

### **Central Prayer:- That they may be one. A unity that that reveals Jesus.**

This is a BIG unity. It’s not just a unity of Christians. It is a unity that includes Christians in the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (17:21). A unity of love – “*I have made known to them your name, and I will make it known, that the love with which you have loved them may be in them , and I in them*” (17:26)

The unity has a purpose. “*so that the world may believe that you have sent me and have loved them as you have loved me*” (17:21)

The unity Jesus is praying for will reveal the Father and Jesus. The work that Jesus did goes on in the church as it reveals Jesus in its unity.

So what is the unity??

- 1) it is created by God. It is not dependent on humans. It has one shepherd. It is one temple.
- 2) it is an easy observation that although the church is God’s creation it is also a human organization and not free from sin. This sinfulness includes much division.
- 3) It is the unity of the church that is to reveal Jesus – his being and his work. Our words matter but the transformed nature of God’s people is meant to be inexplicable except in terms of the work of God.

### **This Prayer**

Jesus asks his Father to glorify him (17:1), So that he might glorify the Father (17:1).

Jesus is glorified in the disciples (17:10) as they are his.

The glory the Father gave the Son has been given to believers by the Son. (17:22)

The glorification of Jesus is from the Father and extends to believers so that all that comes from God may be made visible to all creation. Life (17:2) sanctification (17:7) truth (17:17) unity (17:21) love (17:23). A marvellous manifestation of God’s eternal purpose.