



RED HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

THE WEEKLY BRICK

May 16, 2010.

As you come to him, the living Stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. - 1 Peter 2:4-5

Sunday, May 16th 2010

“The Other “Lord’s Prayer””

John 17:20-26

*John 17:20-21 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,
²¹that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.*

John 17:20-23

Jesus _____ for me!

Jesus _____ for me!

Rom 8:34 Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.”

WE ARE GAINING _____

Definition

Jesus’ definition of unity:
Just as you are in me and I am in you.

The result of true unity: The world knows that you’ve sent me.

John 17:24-26

Jesus WANTS us to be with Him!

How do we know that Christians go to heaven?

The price Jesus paid:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

The promise Jesus made:

“In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.” John 14:2

The prayer Jesus prayed:

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory” John 17:24

(Answers: Prayed, Prays, Unity.)

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

☐ Day #1--Monday, May 17th Read: John 17:1-5.

This week, we will study the prayer of Jesus recorded in John 17. Traditionally, this prayer has been referred to as Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer," highlighting the role of Jesus as intercessor, praying to the Father for His followers then and now.

Jesus could approach God in prayer because of Their Father-Son relationship. This is the only occasion when Jesus is recorded to have used the title "Jesus Christ" (v.3). The main theme of this section of the prayer is "glory." The divine plan of redemption, Jesus' death and resurrection, was at hand. For Jesus, this is the pathway to glory. In fact, in John's gospel, the word "glory" most always refers to His death and resurrection. Jesus' primary concern is the mutual glorification of Father and Son. This request for glorification included sustaining Jesus in suffering, accepting His sacrifice, resurrecting Him, and restoring Him to His pristine glory. In addition, the word "glory" is used eight times in this prayer.

Jesus glorified the Father in His miracles (John 2:11; 11:40); and He brought the greatest glory to the Father through His sufferings and death (John 12:23-25; 13:31-32). From the human point of view, Calvary was a revolting display of man's sin; but from the divine point of view, the cross revealed and magnified the grace and glory of God. Jesus anticipated His return to heaven when He said, "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do (v.4). Also, Jesus affirms that the outcome of the mission cannot fail because it is in the Father's hands. Jesus asks the Father that His followers may know the Father. This knowing of God is a personal relationship of intimacy which is continuous and dynamic. The word Greek "know" "*ginōskōsin*," is used in the present tense, and is often used to describe the intimacy of a personal relationship. Thus a person who knows God has an intimate personal relationship with Him. And that relationship is eternal, not temporal. Eternal life is not simply endless existence. Everyone will exist somewhere forever (Matthew 25:46), but the question is, in what condition or in what relationship will they spend eternity? (We will revisit the issue of eternal life on Saturday).

Question/Reflect: How *do* you bring God glory in your life? How *can* you bring God glory in your life?

☐ Day #2--Tuesday, May 18th Read: John 17:6-19.

Jesus now changes from praying about Himself and His mission to praying for His disciples. The phrase "I have revealed you..." sum up the whole of Jesus' ministry. The subject of this revelation in the Greek is "your name" which has been summarized in most translations with the word, "you." It is most likely that the name in mind is that of the God the Father. Jesus' prayer was particularly for His current disciples, though of course, it applies to all believers who became Christians through the original eleven apostles (obviously minus Judas). Jesus is aware of the hostility that exists for disciples of all times and places in relationship to the dominant culture. In fact, in these verses (13-18) there is a strong contrast between the disciples and the world. There is a further contrast between being "not of the world" (vs.14, 16) and "out of the world" (v.15).

Jesus would soon depart to the Father and leave His disciples in the world. The disciples had to stay in the world to carry out God's plan in spreading the good news of redemption and in planting the church. This carrying out the divine plan in the world will be difficult; in fact it will be spiritual warfare! The burden of the prayer is for protection from "the evil one." Jesus asked the Father to protect them (us) and keep them (us) from Satan and the animosity of those who deny God and God's ownership of this world. As Jesus prays for His disciples' preservation ("protect them," v. 11) and also their sanctification ("sanctify them," v. 17), we see the dual nature of God's word in the life of the disciple. God's word is powerful both positively and negatively. Negatively, God's word is the means of stirring up the hatred of the world and the satanic powers, resulting in hostile reactions from the enemies of God and often, the persecution of believers who are bound by God's word. Positively, God's word is the means of sanctification (growing spiritually). Sanctification—set apart for God and changed in one's living in order to honor God (John 15:3-4), is the result of salvation—being saved by Jesus through His "glory" on the cross and in the resurrection. Jesus' words, "All I have is Yours, and all You have is Mine," reveal Jesus' claim to unity, intimacy, and equality with the Father.

Question/Reflect: How are your prayers for others like/unlike Jesus' prayer? Do your prayers reflect the "short-term urgent," or the "long-term important" needs that people have?

☐ **Day #3--Wednesday, May 19th Read Again: John 17:6-19.**

One other point in this passage; as the faithful Son and Good Shepherd, Jesus took care of the flock entrusted to Him by the Father. Jesus does mention Judas. He is called “the one doomed to destruction” (literally, “the son of perdition”). Here is an example of the tension between God’s sovereignty and human choice. Even people’s volitionally free acts (Judas choosing to betray Jesus) fit into God’s sovereign plan (Acts 2:23; 4:28). Thus Judas’ betrayal of Jesus fulfilled the words of David in Psalm 41:9 about David’s betrayal by his friend. Finally, Jesus prays in verse 13 that His disciples receive the “full measure of my joy within them.” In the expression “*the full measure of my joy*,” the possessive ‘my’ is emphatic. Jesus wants to give us joy! How different this reality is from those who define Christianity as “dull,” “judgmental,” or “gloomy.” Jesus is alive and we can rejoice!

Question/Reflect: What reasons have you heard for *not* believing in Jesus? What does it mean to you that Jesus wants you to have the full-measure of His joy?

☐ **Day #4--Thursday, May 20th Read: John 17:20-26.**

While Jesus has been praying about His immediate disciples, we can trust that His prayer also apply to His present-day disciples—you and I. We can believe this because of Jesus’ words in verse 20. He made no distinction between those who had heard him personally and those who will hear through others. It is the truth that all Christians have come to Christ directly or indirectly through the apostles’ witness. Jesus knew His mission would succeed. He would die and be raised, He would send forth the Spirit, the apostles would preach, people would be converted, and the church would be formed. As each high priest of Israel bore the names of the tribes before the presence of God in the tabernacle and the temple (Exodus. 28:9-12, 21-29), so now Jesus, the great High Priest, carried future believers into the holy presence of His heavenly Father (Hebrews 4:14-5:12; 7:24-8:2).

For both present day and future disciples, Jesus prayed for unity (John 17:11, 22). The pattern for unity is the relationship between the Father and the Son (v.21), the basis is abiding in the Father and the Son, and the purpose is evangelistic (v.21, 23), that more people will come to Jesus and Jesus’ Father. The “abiding cycle” in this passage is faith leading to unity which leads others to faith. Jesus continues His theme of “glory” by linking it with the Father’s love towards him “before the creation of the world,” an echo of the pre-existence theme we have already looked at in verse 5. The suggestion is that the glory of Christ engenders unity. Not only must the unity be complete, it must be shown to the world. The concluding verses (24–26) follow on from v 24 but also form a fitting climax to the whole prayer. The address to God as “Righteous Father,” emphasizes the justness of God’s view of the world. Again we meet with the strong contrast between the world (the dominant culture estranged from God) and the disciples. Jesus’ request, that the “love you have for me may be in them” means that Christians may reflect the Father’s love by their love for Jesus and for others. The prayer thus ends with the request for the indwelling Christ in believers.

Question/Reflect: What does Jesus’ ultimate desire (v.24) reveal about His love for us?

☐ **Day #5--Friday, May 21st Read Again: John 17:20-26.**

We revisit the theme of unity found in Jesus. As Jesus prays for the unity of His followers, Jesus does this so that His followers may be united in love; love for each other and for the world. One of the things that most impresses the world is the way Christians love each other and live together in harmony. It is this witness that our Lord wants in the world so “that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me” (John 17:21). Jesus was praying for a unity of love, a unity of obedience to God and His Word, and a united commitment to His will. There are great differences between uniformity and unity. All believers belong to the one body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13) and their spiritual unity is to be manifest in the way they live under the Lordship of Christ. However, unity does not mean that all Christians are the same or at the same place on the spiritual journey.

The unity Jesus desires for His church is the same kind of unity the Son has with the Father: just as You are in Me and I am in You (John 10:38; 17:11, 23). The Father did His works through the Son and the Son always did what pleased the Father (John 5:30; 8:29). This spiritual unity is to be patterned in the church. Without union with Jesus and the Father (“they . . . in us”), Christians can do nothing (John 15:5). The goal of the unity of believers with each other and with God is twofold: (a) that the world will believe in the Son’s divine mission (“know that You sent Me”), and (b) that the world will sense that God’s love for believers is deep, intimate, and lasting as is His love for His unique Son (cf. v. 26). The lost

world cannot see God, but they can see Christians; and what they see in us is what they will believe about God. If they see love and unity, they will believe that God is love. If they see hatred and division, they will reject the message of the Gospel. Jesus has assured us that some will believe because of our witness (John 17:20), but we must make sure that our witness is true and loving. Some Christians are “prosecuting attorneys” and “judges” instead of faithful witnesses, and this only turns lost sinners away from the Savior.

Question/Reflect: How important to you is unity with other believers? With whom do you share this unity? How can you experience more unity?

□ Day #6--Saturday, May 22nd Read Again: John 17:20-26

As cited above, notice that Jesus’ prayer for believers ends with a call to the “Righteous Father.” (v.25) The word translated “righteous” here does not occur often in John’s Gospel (C.f. 5:30; 7:24). Its significance here seems to be in Jesus’ praise of the Father for His work of revelation (Matthew 11:25-26). The Father is right (righteous) and the world is in the wrong (“the world does not know You”). Jesus has known, revealed (John 17:6), and glorified (v. 4) the Father, and so should Christians. The essence of God is love (1 John 4:8). Jesus made the Father and His love known to the world by His death. And the Father made known His love for the Son by raising Him to glory. Jesus’ purpose in revealing the Father was that Christians would continue to grow in that love (“that the Father’s love for the Son may be in them”) and to enjoy the personal presence of Jesus in their lives (“that I Myself may be in them”).

In this very dense portion of scripture, we even receive a hope of life after death. Jesus’ prayer is that that His disciples enter into (see) His glory (Hebrews 2:10). Jesus describes how eternal life is received: knowing the only true God through His Son (Matthew 11:27). The communion and fellowship which disciples have with Jesus in this life will increase in eternity. The goal of a believer’s salvation is future glorification which includes being with Jesus (John 14:3; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:17). Again, this glory was what Jesus had from His Father and would again have (John 17:5). Notice, in John 17:25–26, there are no petitions. Jesus simply reported to His Father about the ministry in the world, and He made several declarations that are important to us. He declared that the world does not know the Father, but that we believers know Him because the Son has revealed the Father to us. The world certainly has many opportunities to get to know the Father, but it prefers to go on in blindness and hardness of heart. Our task as Christians is to bear witness to the lost world and share God’s saving message. The Father always answers His Son’s prayers, so we know that believers who die do go to heaven to behold the glory of God.

Question/Reflect: Who is the focus of Jesus’ prayer in vs. 20-26? What kind of unity exists between God and Jesus that we should copy?

Homework/Discuss in your Small Group

- Read this prayer, out loud, during a prayer time this week.
- Spend an hour with the Lord this week focusing on this single question, “Am I doing what God gave me to do?”
- Do something about security: Begin each day this week praying that the power of God’s name would protect you from the world and from Satan.
- Do something about maturity: Have a daily prayer/quiet time this week.
- Do something about unity: Forgive a fellow-believer towards whom you’re holding a grudge.

