

# I PRAY

## JOHN 17:13-26

(Prepared by Gene Thompson using LifeWay's ETB material.)

1. Where have you encountered shatterproof glass?  
French chemist Edouard Benedictus invented shatterproof glass when he accidentally dropped a flask that had a thin layer of dried plastic cellulose nitrate residue inside it. Although covered in a web of cracks, the thin film kept the flask together. The pieces were bound by the properties of the film.
2. What are the benefits of shatterproof glass? (It maintains its integrity because pieces that normally would fall apart and be scattered are held in place by a special coating.)
3. How does that resemble the Christian life? (We are held together by the invisible Holy Spirit, both individually and collectively.)

John 17 gives us Jesus' longest recorded prayer—known as His High Priestly Prayer. It focused on believers sticking together, refusing to be broken and scattered. The first part of the chapter records Jesus prayer for Himself. After that He interceded for the disciples and for future believers. As we study these verses think about how you can promote the kind of unity that becomes a witness to the world.

### **SANCTIFY! Read John 17:13-19**

1. What did Jesus desire for His disciples in verse 13? (Facing terrible persecution and death on a cross in just a few hours, Jesus spoke of "joy." He wanted their joy to be completed in them. Jesus' joy came from being obedient to the Father.)
2. In what way is the "world" antagonistic toward Christians? (They hate everything and every person that stands for God.)
3. How can believers engage with an antagonistic world? (Through the joy we have in Christ, the unity through the Holy Spirit and the love we have for each other the world will see Jesus in us.)
4. Why did Jesus want the disciples left in the world? (The world is their "mission field.")
5. What did Jesus ask the Father to do? (Protect them and sanctify them. Set them apart.)
6. How are they sanctified? (By the truth of God's Word!)

That is why it is so important for us to study God's Word. When we apply God's Word to our lives we will be set apart from the world.

7. How does verse 18 connect sanctification to our responsibility to share Jesus with others? (We have been commissioned to declare the Gospel to the world, starting right where God has us. That is why we are still here on earth. When our mission is completed, we will go home to the Father!)

We are to live sanctified lives—set apart from the world! We are in the world but not of the world!

### **UNITE! Read John 17:20-23**

1. If you knew Jesus was praying for you, what requests would you want Him to mention? (Give me more boldness to witness; move in the lives of my children and grandchildren.)  
Jesus broadened the focus of His prayer to include those who would come to faith because of His disciples' ministry and mission. He was praying for the coming spiritual generations, those who would come to faith through the disciples' words.
2. What kind of witness is it to the world when Christians fight and argue with each other?
3. Why is Christian unity such an important aspect of our witness to an unbelieving world? (Our unity testifies to Christ. Believers' relationships are not intended merely to make us feel good. Our love for one another lets the world know we are His disciples—John 13:35.)
4. How does a shared faith unify believers from different cultures? (We have a common Lord and the Holy Spirit dwells within each believer.)

5. What does it mean to you to know that Jesus is praying for you? (It gives me confidence to carry out the mission He has given me, knowing He gives me strength by praying to the Father about me specifically.)
6. How do puzzles illustrate Christian unity? (Each part fits perfectly to give the whole picture.)  
When we are working together for the gospel, we are more effective. People want to be a part of a community, not a group of dysfunctional individuals.
7. Is there some area of your life that you are not promoting unity in the body of Christ?  
Jesus could have prayed about so many things, but He prayed about our unity. That's important because it reflects the relationship between Jesus and His heavenly Father.

### **GATHER! Read John 17:24-26**

1. What does Jesus reveal about Himself by allowing us to overhear this prayer? ("Jesus begins the prayer with a single request: "Glorify me." When we talk about the glory of God and glorifying God, we need to remember that we're referring to a noun and a verb. The "glory" of God is a noun and means His majesty or His splendor, His "display of divine goodness". When we talk about God's being glorified—the verb, we mean the appropriate response to His goodness displayed. So, the glory of God (noun) is His goodness displayed, and glorifying God (verb) is His goodness celebrated. God is glorious regardless of whether anyone understands who He is, but we glorify God by seeing His goodness and worshipping Him for it."—Mat Carter.)
2. What impact does the promise of seeing the glory of God have on the way we love others? (Jesus noted that the world did not know the Father, but He also affirmed that He knew the Father and that the Father knew Him. He had glorified the Father by revealing His nature and character. As a result, the disciples had come to know the Father just as they had come to know Jesus.)
3. How would Jesus' disciples see His glory after He went back to heaven? (The unity among believers would reveal God's glory because it would reveal Jesus' continuing work on earth. Jesus promised to make Himself known through His people as they lived in unity and love.)
4. How aware are you of Christ's presence in your life through the Holy Spirit?
5. How can you become more aware of His presence? (Meditating on the Word. Prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you, and then listen for His voice.)

### **SUMMARY AND CHALLENGE!**

- Through unity and love believers share in representing Jesus in this sinful world.
  - Believers should be accepting and find acceptance from other believers.
  - We can live with a shared assurance of seeing God's glory.
1. A shared commitment to God's purposes produces unity among believers. How can we be even more unified in our commitment to carrying out God's purposes where we live?
  2. What changes might you need to make to show to a greater degree the difference Christ has made in you?

Thank You Father for the Son's prayers on our behalf.

Help our unity to grow in our church.

Praise You, Father that someday we will see Your glory face to face.