

# John 17



PART 1 / 3

STUDY GUIDE

JULY 23 - AUGUST 13

# Introduction

Our theme for 2023 has been *All of God for All of Us*. The desire has been to see how the fullness of the Triune God — Father, Son, and Spirit — loves, cares, and provides for the fullness of us, both individually and as a people. Our next two series, John 17 and Divine Community, are the culmination of that reality. When we experience the fullness of the love and fellowship of God, we are drawn to unity — unity that transcends difference. In fact, that transcendent, love-formed unity confirms that God, indeed, is with us, present and active.

This is Jesus' primary prayer and belief for his followers in John 17. Jesus is at the end of his time on earth and asks God to make his love and glory known to all people. The strategy Jesus gives is simple: Let them be one as We are One. **Our unity bears credible witness to the love of God.** Doubters, seekers, and followers alike ought to be able

to look at the remarkable unity of the church and believe that Jesus is the loving King who is worthy of our lives. Our time in John 17 is the foundation for that. We'll then move into a 13 week series titled Divine Community, where we'll explore the full reality of that unity in all of its multi-ethnic, global goodness.

This is the first of three study guides that will take us through the Fall. They have been created to help lead us together to a deeper appreciation for and commitment to unity through Scripture, contemplation, prayer, and action. We'd encourage you to commit to carving time out weekly (even if just once a week), to put away your phone, turn off your devices, and be present with God. Bring these guides along with you on Sundays, write in them, study God's word, pray boldly, and ask that the Lord would grow and challenge us both as individuals and a church — that we might be credible witnesses to the love of God.

**MAIN FOCUS**

The public glory of the Triune God is wrapped up in him saving a people for himself.

This is the start of our two-part series, beginning with our walkthrough of John 17 and ending with a look at Divine Community. This will be your guide through these passages over the next four weeks through John 17. These coming weeks will walk us through the purpose and necessity of the unity of God's people — the public demonstration of the glory of the Trinity. John 17 touches on a lot of different points, including the purpose of unity, which is part of God's ultimate glory, and the means of unity, which is the finished and saving work of Jesus. Over the coming weeks, our hope and desire is that we grow in seeing the grand picture of who God is and what he is doing in us. John 17 takes place at the end of several lengthy discourses where Jesus teaches us how we are to relate to and love him and fellow believers. This section of the Gospel of John concludes with John 17, where Jesus prays to the Father that we would "all be one," unified as the body of Christ (verses 11, 21).

**PASSAGE**

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, <sup>2</sup> since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. <sup>3</sup> And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

**SERMON NOTES**

**SILENCE**

Start by taking two minutes of complete silence and stillness to prepare your heart, soul, and mind to meet with the Lord. Be attentive to his love and care for you, listening to what he has to teach you.

**STUDY**

Read John 17:1-5. How would you summarize what happens here?



In this passage, we see Jesus praying to God with the end in mind: eternal life available for all those who God has given to Christ. We continue reading, seeing that Jesus tells us, clear as day, what eternal life is: knowing God and knowing Jesus (verse 3).



This passage says that eternal life is found in knowing God and knowing Jesus. What are some ways you don't know God and Jesus but want to? How might you grow to know and love God more deeply?



Write any thoughts or questions you have below.



Jesus continues praying to God and, in doing so, tells us that he came to fulfill and do what God sent him to. This was to make God known to mankind and to offer himself as the Lamb of God. This had yet to be fulfilled, as we look ahead to chapters 18-21, where Jesus completed his work on earth via the cross. Jesus knew that giving up glory on earth would mean eternal glory with God the Father, just like he had with God "before the world existed" (verse 5).



Read Ephesians 4:32-5:2. Jesus' love for us was physically represented and acted out on the cross. How could the command to be "imitators of God" shift the way you love those around you? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.

**PRAYER**

Close your time in prayer, thanking Jesus for providing life through his death and asking him to grow your heart to love others as he does.

**MAIN FOCUS**

The community of Jesus bears credible witness to the Triune God by being one as God is one.

Jesus has chosen to place the pivot point of God's public worship and glory on his people and on the prayer that they (that's us, folks) would be unified as the Trinity is unified. The beauty in this? While it feels like it's "on us" to get it right, our lives are being actively transformed by God through the Holy Spirit. Those who are in Christ are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and we are called to live it out with fellow believers. The church is to be a beacon of unified hope for the world, and this is what Jesus prays for on our behalf.

**SERMON NOTES**
**PASSAGE**

<sup>6</sup> I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. <sup>8</sup> For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. <sup>11</sup> And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

**SILENCE**

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**STUDY**

Read John 17:6-12. How would you summarize what happens here?



In this week's passage, we encounter Jesus continuing his prayer for his people. This prayer was originally for those who followed him, namely his twelve disciples (Jesus later prays for those who will one day follow him, but we'll get to that in a few weeks). However, this same prayer of blessing and protection applies to all those who genuinely follow Christ. He prays (while teaching us) that we are his possession because we believe (verses 6-8). In verse 10, Jesus also prays, stating that "I am glorified in them," but what does that really mean? Jesus is telling those around him (and reminding us) that our lives should display the nature of Christ and that he is present in the world through us.

Reread verse 10. What would it look like to glorify Christ in your day-to-day? What are some areas you need to grow in? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.



Continuing to dig deeper, we see Jesus specifically praying for those God has given to Christ to shepherd (verse 9). This is Jesus praying for all of his people, the body of believers, and what we now identify as the church. Jesus asks of the Father that his people would be protected and that they would "be one as we are one" (verse 11). Interesting, isn't it? Jesus prays two things over his people: protection and unity. God desires that, for his glory, we will be safe and live in harmony together.



Jesus prays that we, his people, would be protected and unified. Given that we only play a part in the latter, what are some relationships in your life you can identify as needing greater unity? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.

**PRAYER**

Close your time in prayer, thanking Jesus for his protections and love for you, asking him to grow your heart to love and be unified with others.

**MAIN FOCUS**

Jesus sanctifies his people so that they may be one in the world to the glory of God.

This part of Jesus’ prayer stands out for us because this is where Jesus pinpoints the motivating factor to our unity: God’s people are not of this world and, as a result, will experience varying forms of resistance and pushback from the world. We are different in how we live our lives, how we interact with culture, and how we are unified with one another. We belong to God. Even though we’re going to face resistance in the world, Jesus doesn’t pray that we would be removed from it, but that as a unified group, we would glorify God and become more like him, together. Knowing this, we should feel encouraged to be different from the world and remain unified with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ for the glory of God.

**PASSAGE**

<sup>13</sup> But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

**SERMON NOTES**

**SILENCE**

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**STUDY**

Read John 17:13-19. How would you summarize what happens here?



This week, we read Jesus praying not only for God's glory but that we would experience joy in him through living in community with one another and through him. Jesus specifically tells us that "the world has hated" those who follow him, and this is to be expected (verse 14).

In light of this passage, what are some ways you experience the world hating you or other followers of Jesus for your faith? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.



Resuming in the passage, we see Jesus' prayer continues. He prays to the Father not "that [he] take them out of the world," but that he would "keep them from the evil one" (verse 15). We read a little about this last week as we read John 17:11, where he prays that the Father would "keep them" in his name. Other translations state Jesus' prayer as "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name" (NIV). Jesus desires not for us to be removed from the world (or that our responsibility would be negated), but that God would protect us and the Holy Spirit would empower us to live lives as he desires.

Jesus prays that we would be protected, rather than removed, from the world. How does this change how you think about living life for Christ on earth and with fellow believers in the church? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.

**PRAYER**

Close your time in prayer, thanking Jesus for providing protection and care, asking him to grow your heart to love the church as he does.



**MAIN FOCUS**

God makes his people one with each other as they become one with Him and know the depth of his love.

We're now in the final week of our study through John 17. Jesus shows us how we're to glorify him and "be one" as he is one with the Father: we're to abide in him. As we're more deeply connected to God, we're more deeply connected to one another and have a credible witness to the world. But how do we do this? Jesus promises the Helper, the Holy Spirit, will take all that is his and declare it to us (John 16:15). So while we deepen our awareness of God's love for us by studying his word, worshiping him with his church, and talking with him through prayer, the Spirit uses these to help us experience this love and connection with God, offering a glimpse of the perfect relationship that exists within the Trinity. As we become closer to him, we become more aware of his perfect love and how it unites us to one another, revealing the glory of God to us and those around us.

<sup>20</sup> I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup> that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. <sup>24</sup> Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. <sup>25</sup> O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup> I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

PASSAGE

**SERMON NOTES**

**SILENCE**

Start by taking two minutes of complete silence and stillness to prepare your heart, soul, and mind to meet with the Lord. Be attentive to his love and care for you, listening to what he has to teach you.

**STUDY**

Read John 17:20-26. How would you summarize what happens here?

In this passage, Jesus prays for those who have yet to believe, asking God that they too, would be one when they come to believe. Jesus uses the unity between himself and the Father as a reason for people coming to know him. He prays, begging that the church would be unified and one (verse 21).



Here, Jesus prays that the church would be unified so “the world may believe.” When have you seen disunity become a hindrance to the witness of Christ? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.

At the end of his prayer, Jesus shows his desire: that his people would see his glory and be changed by it. Seeing the glory of God is transformational. The glory of God and unity with him causes us to live radically different lives from that of the world. Yes, the world (to a degree) desires unity, but this like forcing a round peg into a square hole. Life apart from God cannot produce sustaining fruit, but life with him transforms our hearts to be more loving, compassionate, and caring. Unity with God and the body of Christ is radically different and is one of the most impactful ways to tell the world that those who follow Christ are different.



Knowing that harmony within the church is a significant witness to the world, how does that motivate you to build relationships with fellow believers in your church or community group? Write any thoughts or questions you have below.

**PRAYER**

Close your time in prayer, thanking Jesus for saving you, asking him to grow your heart toward fellow believers, and showing you how to grow in love for them.



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