

Bible Stories for Adults

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

John 17

Opening

- Gathering: What makes a prayer a good and God-pleasing prayer?
- Today's Focus: Jesus revealed His deepest desire and plan of bringing us into His glory through the High Priestly Prayer He prayed after his last supper.
- Key Verses: *Father, the time has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You.* John 17:1
Now this is eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent. John 17:3

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Upsetting News (*John 13*)

- What upsetting news did Jesus give His disciples during His last supper?
John 13:21 = *One of you is going to betray Me*
- How did the news get worse?
John 13:37-38 = Even Peter would *disown Me three times* that night
- How did the news get even worse?
Matthew 26:31 = They would all fall away from Him that night
- How did the news then turn horrible?
John 13:33 = Jesus would soon leave, they couldn't go with Him

Five Reasons to Leave (*John 14*)

- How did Jesus try to reassure His disciples that his leaving was a good thing?
John 14:1-3 (1-3) = He was going to prepare a place for them and would come back for them
- Why was it important for Jesus to come back and take them there?
John 14:4-9 (4-11) = To give them the way to recognize the Father and be with Him
- What would Jesus do for them while He was gone that required Him to leave?
John 14:13-14 (12-14) = Answer the prayers of those who belonged to Him
- How would Jesus keep them from being alone while He was gone? = Would explain God's truths
John 14:16, 26 (15-26) = He would send the Counselor to be with them forever
- What else would the disciples need that Jesus would leave with them?
John 14:27 (27-31) = His complete peace, not a shallow worldly peace

Instructions While He's Gone (*John 15*)

- What were the disciples to do while Jesus was away?
John 15:1, 4, 8 (1-8) = Remain connected to Jesus and produce His fruit
- What fruit is Jesus' branches to produce? = Share the news of God's salvation shows our love
John 15:10-11 (9-17) = The joy of loving one another as He first loved us
- Should the branches expect to experience the fruit of love at all times while connected to the vine?
John 15:18-19 (18-27) = No, the world outside the vine would hate them since it hates the vine

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The Spirit's Work (John 16:1-22)

What would the Spirit do for the world that hates the vine and its branches?

John 16:7-8 (1-11) = *He will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment*

What would the Spirit do for the vine?

John 16:12-14 (12-15) = *He will bring glory to the vine by making known the truths of the vine*

What would the Spirit do for the branches?

John 16:20-22 (16-22) = *He would turn their grief into everlasting joy when they see Jesus again*

Understanding the Vine (John 16:28-33)

How well did the disciples understand what Jesus said in these chapters?

John 16:17-18 = *They couldn't understand what is even very obvious to us*

Was there anything they could understand? = *Clarified to them that He was leaving the world*

John 16:28-29 = *They understood when Jesus said He came from the Father into the world*

Did they gain any great insights from what they understood?

John 16:30-31 = *They understood and believed that Jesus came from God*

What would this mean for the disciples when Jesus was gone?

John 16:33 = *They would have peace because Jesus has overcome the world*

Access to the Father (John 16:23-27)

How could the disciples have peace in this troubled world while Jesus was gone?

Hebrews 7:25 = *Jesus intercedes for us with the Father*

Does this mean that we have to go through the Son to talk with the Father?

Romans 8:26 = *No, the Spirit also intercedes for us*

So, our access to the Father is either through the Son or the Spirit, right?

Romans 8:27 = *The Father searched our hearts and knows our needs*

How did Jesus explain to the disciples that they now have direct access to the Father?

John 16:23, 26-27 = *The Father Himself loves you and will answer your prayers*

How had Jesus revealed this direct access to the Father early in His ministry?

Matthew 6:9-13 = *He taught them to pray to the Father in the Believer's Prayer*

Note: Prayer is incorrectly called the Lord's Prayer because Jesus couldn't pray it = *No sins to forgive*

The Lord's Prayer (John 17:1)

If the Lord's Prayer isn't really the Lord's Prayer, then what could be called the Lord's Prayer?

John 17:1a = *Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer" in John 17*

Longest prayer of Jesus recorded in the Bible = *Called "The Holy of Holies in John's Gospel"*

We get to listen in on a private conversation between God the Son and God the Father

Wiersbe, 1992 - *You could spend many weeks meditating on the truths in this chapter.*

Milligan & Moulton, 1898 - *No attempt to describe the prayer can give a just idea of its sublimity, its pathos, its touching yet exalted character, its tone at once of tenderness and triumphant expectation.*

Why is this often called Jesus' High Priestly Prayer?

Hebrews 5:1, 7-10 = *Jesus represented our needs to the Father as our Great High Priest*

Three Focuses of Jesus' High Priestly Prayer:

17:1-5 Jesus Prays for Himself

17:6-19 Jesus Prays for His Disciples

17:20-26 Jesus Prays for All Believers

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Jesus Prays for Himself (*John 17:1*)

What did Jesus ask the Father to do for Him?

John 17:1 = To glorify Him so that He may glorify the Father

What did it mean that the time had come for Jesus to be glorified?

Hebrews 2:9 = He'd be *crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death ... for everyone*

Why was it important that Jesus had been *made a little lower than the angels* as a man?

Hebrews 2:14-17 = He became like us in order to become our Great High Priest and Atonement

Jesus' Glory (*John 17:2-5*)

Besides obedience to fulfill the Father's plan, how would glorifying the Son lead to glorifying the Father?

John 10:30 (12:44-45; 14:9-11) = *I and the Father are one* - To glorify one is to glorify the other

Why was Jesus' obedience to the Father's plan through death His greatest glory?

John 17:2-3 = Through it Jesus has authority to give eternal life to all who know Him

Was this glory a reward to the Son for completing the work?

John 17:4-5 = No, it was a return to the glory He already had – before He was humbled as a man

Jesus Prays for His Disciples - Glorify (*John 17:6-10*)

What had Jesus done for His disciples during His earthly ministry?

John 17:6-8 = He revealed the Father and His will to them – they believed and obeyed

Was Jesus praying specifically for His disciples or for all people?

John 17:9-10 = For His disciples through whom He had received glory through their faith

Jesus Prays for His Disciples - Unify (*John 17:11-15*)

What was Jesus' concern for His disciples?

John 17:11 = That they may be protected and stay unified in Christ

Why was Jesus saying this prayer aloud for the disciples to hear and remember?

John 17:12-13 = So they'd recognize God's protection before and after, and be filled with His joy

What protection would they need?

John 17:14-15 = Protection from attacks by Satan and his hating world

Jesus Prays for His Disciples - Sanctify (*John 17:16-19*)

Besides protection, what did Jesus ask for His disciples? = Sanctify – set apart for sacred use, make holy

John 17:16-17 = Sanctify them by the word of truth

What sacred use would Jesus have for His disciples?

John 17:18-19 = To go into the world to continue His work

How did Jesus clarify this purpose right before He ascended?

Matthew 28:18-20 = He told us to *go and make disciples of all nations*

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Jesus Prays for All Believers (*John 17:20-21*)

Was Jesus praying just for His 11 apostles?

John 17:20 = No, it was for all believers – the disciples that would be made in all nations

What was His concern for those who would become disciples throughout this diverse world?

John 17:21 = That they may be one – Unity in Christ in order to draw the world to Christ

Did this unity mean that there are to be no differences between believers?

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 18-20 = Different parts but one body, one Spirit, one faith

Our Example of Diverse Unity (*John 17:22-23*)

What example do we have of how this diverse unity is to work? = Trinity - Three persons in one God

John 17:22 = That we may be one as the Father and Son are one

Why is this unity important?

John 17:23 = *To let the world know that Jesus was sent by the Father out of His love for us*

Jesus' Ultimate Desire for All Believers (*John 17:24-26*)

What is Jesus' ultimate desire for all believers?

John 17:24 = *To be with Me where I am and to see My glory*

What is Jesus' role in making this happen?

John 17:25-26 = He has made the Father and His love known to us and in us

Jesus Keeps Praying (*John 18:1*)

What did Jesus do after completing this great prayer?

John 18:1 = He took His disciples to a garden on the Mount of Olives

Why did Jesus go into this garden? = Next week's lesson

Luke 22:39-42 = To pray more – this time about His impending suffering and death

What should we learn from the fact that the Son of God felt it so important to pray often with the Father?

Philippians 4:6-7 = *In everything ... present your requests to God* – Receive God's peace

Was this just Paul's suggestion or did Jesus agree that we should always pray?

Luke 18:1 = He taught that we *should always pray and not give up*

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. In what ways do I bring glory to God?
(*John 17:6-10; Isaiah 43:6-7; Romans 1:21-23; 1 Cor. 10:31; Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 4:10-11*)
2. how well do I know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent?
(*John 17:3; Jeremiah 9:23-24; Hosea 6:6; Philippians 3:7-11; 1 John 2:3-6; 5:20*)
3. What do I do that shows that I am sanctified – set apart for God's sacred use?
(*John 17:16-19; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 1:8; 6:15-23; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Colossians 1:10-12*)
4. When have others come to believe through my message?
(*John 17:20; 1:41, 45; 4:39-42; 20:30-31; 21:24-25; Acts 26:15-18; 2 Timothy 4:5*)
5. How have I upheld the unity of Christ's body?
(*John 17:20-23; Romans 15:5-6; 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 1:10; 11:17-19; 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:1-16*)