



Sermon Title: "That They May be One" by Paul Verryn 29.05.2022



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John 17:20-26

Jesus has been praying for His disciples. Now He broadens the prayer to include all those who would believe in Him due to the disciples' testimony. In other words He prayed for us.

The disciples would desert Him within hours, but He knew they would carry on the work He had given them and many would come to faith as a result of their ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

He prayed that His followers would be united whatever their race, background, language, class, or any other aspect of life that could divide them. He prayed that they may live in unity with one another in the same way as the Father and Son do. The unity of the Church is very important to Jesus; but it goes further than that, for He prays that they may live in unity with the Father and the Son too.

The unity Jesus was praying for was not a legalistic uniformity but the unity of the Spirit based on love. It is this unity of the Church that will enable the world to judge the truth of His message. When the Church is divided the world will come down in judgment against Him.

Just as God shared His glory with Jesus so Jesus passes it on to His followers. The glory of Jesus often seemed to be humble, suffering and weak. It was the glory of sacrifice and it was, in due course, shown on the cross. The glory of Jesus leads His followers to a life of service and self-sacrifice. It is this glory that brings about the unity of love Jesus prayed for.



Jesus repeated His prayer that the unity experienced by God's people originated in the belief that Jesus was sent by God the Father; and that Jesus loves His people in the same way the Father loves Him. It was very important to Him that this was so.

Jesus longs for the work He gave to His followers to be completed so they may be gathered up to Him in heaven and there see His glory which was based on the love that existed between Him and the Father throughout eternity.

In spite of the fact that Jesus was about to go to the cross, He revealed how He honoured and loved the Father as He reached the conclusion of His prayer. The world did not recognise Him for who He was but the disciples did know that the Father had sent Him to the world. He ended on a note of triumph. He would continue to do His work until it was completed as He declared the Name of God to all people. He prayed that this same love would fill His disciples and that His presence would dwell in them forever.

Points to Ponder

- How has prejudice affected you personally? What sort of prejudice was it? How did you cope with it? How do you feel about the people who were prejudiced against you? What did you say to them then? What would you say to them now? How did Jesus help you to deal with it – how do you need Him to help you to deal with it today?
- What does it mean to you to deny yourself? How do you do that? Are some things easier to deny yourself than others for you? What do you find it easy to deny; what do you find it the most difficult to let go? How do you need God to help you? How can the group help you, especially if you are struggling to give up something that is really hard for you?
- Are you ready? Are you ready for Jesus to return? Are you watching with expectation? With hope? With excitement? How do you feel, right now about the fact that Jesus is coming back at any time – maybe tonight – maybe in a year's time or ten years' time? Can you join John in his own invitation, '*Maranatha, come, Lord Jesus, come!*' Why/why not?
- How do you feel when you read that Jesus prayed for you? What does that mean to you? How might it influence the prayers you pray for others? How does it inspire you (or not inspire you) to serve Him with joy? How do you feel when you think about Him praying for the people in your church you do not agree with? What difference does that make to your response to them?

Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/>