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John 17:20-23

- Last week, I introduced a report from the Book of Acts where Luke recounted Paul's last words for the church of Ephesus.
- Today, we want to look at something similar reported by the Apostle John – the last words of Jesus before He was later betrayed in the garden.
- Discourse and prayer covers John 13-17.

▶ John 13:1–4 – *Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him,*



▶ *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and **was going back to God**, got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself."*

- He washed the disciples feet, predicted His betrayal, then comforted, encouraged, and prepared the II for what was to come.

- Finally, in chapter 17, He prayed for His disciples.
- I want to focus on just four verses from this prayer, vss 20-23.
- Interestingly, in these four verses, Jesus prayed **specifically for us**.
- Jesus asked Father to do something **for us**.

- Obviously, this is something that matters profoundly to Jesus.
- So what did He request?
- The answer is in verse 21. He **longs** for something even as He is preparing to walk to Calvary.
- As I prepare to conclude my season among you, His prayer is my prayer for you, as well.

- 2 • Vss. 20–21: *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; **that they may all be one;***
- Jesus is not just praying for the eleven, but all who believe through their word.
 - This is everyone who has believed the gospel.
 - This includes you and me.

- 2 • Vss. 20–21: *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; **that they may all be one;***
- Jesus’ prayer request is captured in the phrase, **“that they may all be one.”**
 - What do we know about this oneness?
 - From vss. 20-23, we can discern three truths.

- Some other vss. will help supplement what we learn in vss. 20-23. Here are the 3 topics:

1. **Definition of oneness:** What oneness is and what it isn't?
2. **Basis of oneness:** How is it produced? Where does it come from?
3. **Fruit from oneness:** What does it accomplish? What does it do?

3 DEFINITION OF ONENESS

- What is this “oneness” for which Jesus prays?
- 4 ²¹*that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us.*
- The oneness He desires reflects the vital inter-connection He has with the Father.

DEFINITION OF ONENESS

- It is also a vital connection with Himself.

5 ²²*that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³I in them and You in Me*

- Jesus wants us to experience a oneness with the Father and Himself that reflects the oneness He has with the Father.

DEFINITION OF ONENESS

- This is astounding! The same connection that He experienced with Father, He wants us to experience, as well as a connection with Him.
- What is this? What does this mean?
- From other passages in John's Gospel, we get a grasp on this oneness.

- 6 ➤ #1: Oneness for Jesus means doing what the Father does in the way Father does it. **One work!**
- John 5:19 – *Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.”*

- John 10:32 – *Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?”*
- 7 ➤ John 10:37-38 – *“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”*

- Jesus purpose is aligned with God’s purpose.
- 8 ➤ For us, oneness with the Father and with Jesus means that our work is His work and His work is our work.
- To be one with the Father means we are fully engaged in what He (and Jesus) wants done.
- His work is my pleasure!

- 9 ➤ John 8:29 – *“And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”*
- John 5:30 – *“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”*

10 #2: Oneness for Jesus means saying what Father says. **One Message!**

- John 8:28 – *So Jesus said, "...and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me."*
- John 12:50 – *"I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."*

11 John 14:9–11 – *Jesus said to him, "...Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."*

- Oneness is oneness of message.

- Jesus words align with what God says.

12 For us, oneness with the Father and with Jesus means that our message is His message and His word is our word.

- To be one with the Father means what we say reflects what God has said.
- His message is my message.

- **Summary:** So when Jesus is praying for us to experience the same oneness He experiences with the Father, He is asking Father to work in such a way that His words become our words and His works become our works.

- 13
- This is a remarkable, dare we call it an astounding, prayer request.
 - Jesus wants us to experience what He has.

14

BASIS OF ONENESS

- How in the world is such a thing possible?
- In His prayer, Jesus provides some clues.

15

20“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also **who believe in Me** through their word;”

- Believing in Jesus is a key condition.

BASIS OF ONENESS

- It is not possible to experience oneness with Father and with Jesus without believing in Jesus.
- What does it mean to believe in Jesus?

16

John 12:42–48 – Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not **confessing** Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than **the approval of God**. And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but **in Him who sent Me**. He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.



16

I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness. If anyone hears My sayings and does not **keep them**, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects Me and does not **receive My sayings**, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

- To believe in Jesus means:
 1. To confess him publicly
 2. To desire God's approval (more than men's)
 3. To believe that Jesus did what God sent Him to do
 4. To keep what He commends
 5. To embrace Jesus' message

- To all who believe in Jesus, they receive the ability to say and do what God wants said and done.
- This seems so profound – is it really this simple?
- Imagine a light switch!
- Jesus reveals there is a power generator behind our simple decision.

17 John 14:16–17, 20 – *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you **another Helper**, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because **He abides with you and will be in you**. ...In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”*

John 14:26 – *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”*

18 John 16:7 – *“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.”*

19 John 16:13–14 – *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”*

- The Holy Spirit makes it possible for all who simply believe in Jesus to say and do God things.

1. **Definition of oneness:** Oneness means His work is our work and His word is our word. We speak Jesus and we do Jesus!
2. **Condition for oneness:** We experience oneness with Father and Son through God’s Spirit when we believe in Jesus.
3. **Result from oneness:** What does this oneness accomplish?

FRUIT FROM ONENESS

20 21 *“that they may all be one; ...so that the world may believe that You sent Me;”* 23 *“that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.”*

- The oneness of believers in Jesus with the Father produces two results.

FRUIT FROM ONENESS

1. Our unity with the Father makes it easier for the world to come to Jesus.
- 22 **Our oneness makes our message credible. When God’s Word is our word and God’s way is our way our message to the world becomes believable.**

23 *Their living relationship with the Father and the Son through the Spirit would give credibility to their message about Jesus, and lead many in the world to believe in Jesus. When those of the world believe, they cease to be 'the world' and join the number of Jesus' disciples – Kruse, C. G.*

- **This is what happened on Pentecost!**

FRUIT FROM ONENESS

2. The world knows that we are a people whom God loves no less than He loves Jesus.

24 **Our oneness makes our identity obvious. When God's Word is our word and God's way is our way we are manifest as people God loves no less than He loves Jesus.**

FRUIT FROM ONENESS

- Think about the dynamic of this last result.
- Incredible truth #1: God loves us like He loves Jesus! This is unbelievable but Jesus says so!
- Incredible truth #2: This fact becomes obvious to the world when our oneness with Father (and Jesus) is displayed.

FRUIT FROM ONENESS

- The Holy Spirit produces this oneness.
- And the cup of the new covenant celebrates this provision even as it recalls what Jesus did to make it possible.
- Communion