

I. Introduction and Review – The Lord’s (High Priestly) Prayer. John 17:1-19

- A. There are similarities between the prayer Jesus taught His disciples (the Lord’s Prayer) and Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer. Luke 11:1-4 Mt. 6:9-13
1. Both address God as Father.
 2. Both pray for God’s name to be hallowed/glorified.
 3. Both pray for His will to be done in the coming of His kingdom.
 4. Both pray that the disciples will be preserved from temptation/the evil one.
- B. First Jesus prays for Himself. v. 1-5
1. His supreme concern is that the Father be glorified as the Son completes His work. v. 1,4-5,10 12:27-28 13:31-32 14:13 15:8 Luke 22:42
 2. He prays particularly that the Father will be glorified in the salvation of His people. v. 2-3 3:35 5:27 13:3 6:37 10:14 1:10 5:21,27 14:6-9 Jer. 31:34
 3. He prays that upon the completion of His work He will be restored to His original glory in the presence of the Father. v. 4-5 17:24 1:11,14 10:30 16:28 8:58 Phil. 2:6-11
 4. Jesus’ prayer has been fully answered. Isa. 53:11 Rev. 1:13-16 5:9-14
- C. Jesus prays for His disciples. v. 6-19
1. They belong to the Father Who gave them to the Son. v. 6a, 15:19
 2. They have received Jesus’ message. v. 6-8
 3. Jesus intercedes for His disciples in particular. v. 9 Ex. 28:12 .
 4. He is glorified in them. 1 Pe. 2:9-10
 5. He prays for their protection. v. 11-16 10:28-29 15:11 16:24 Mt. 6:13 Ps. 20:1
 6. Jesus prays that they would be sanctified in the truth of God’s Word. v. 17-19 10:36 20:21 1 Pet. 1:15-16 Heb. 9:11ff Gal. 1:15
- D. Finally, Jesus prays for those of us who will believe through the testimony of the disciples – that we would be united. v. 20-26

II. Jesus prays that we might be united. v. 20-26

- A. Jesus looks to the future with certainty. v. 20
1. He will glorify the Father in His death by which He will secure eternal life for all that the Father has given Him.
 2. He will be raised from the dead.
 3. The eleven disciples will be kept by the Father, even after scattering, and they will go into the world with the message of the gospel. 10:16 Acts 1:8 2:1ff
 4. The church will be established upon their foundation and it will continue through the ages of human history. Mt. 16:18 Eph. 2:20
- B. Jesus intercedes for those who will believe in future generations. v. 20
1. He prays particularly for His sheep whom the Father has given to Him. v. 20,9 6:37,44 10:26-28,11 Acts 18:10 13:48
 2. The means by which His sheep are gathered is His Word as it is proclaimed by His messengers. 10:27-28 1 Pe. 1:23 Js. 1:18 Eph. 2:17 Ro. 10:14 Heb. 2:3-4
 3. He does not pray for the unity of all humanity, but only of all believers. v. 16
 4. Jesus prays that our unity will resemble His oneness with the Father. v. 21

- C. Jesus is not calling us to unity at any cost. v. 25-26 17: 8,14,17 Eph. 4:4-6 Gal. 1:8f
- D. Jesus is not promoting institutional unity of a man made ecclesiastical structure.
 - 1. There is one universal invisible church which consists of all believers everywhere. 10:16 Eph. 5:25 Mt. 16:18
 - 2. After the apostles passed off of the scene, there is no biblically established office, authority or structure above that of the local church. Eph. 2:20
 - 3. Ecclesiastical hierarchies destroy, rather than promote church unity.
 - 4. Universal ecclesiastical unity will not be achieved until Jesus returns. v. 24
- E. Our unity is to be like the loving union of the Father and the Son. v. 21-23, 25-26 10:30

III. How should our unity be expressed?

- A. Love the brethren.
 - 1. Commit yourself to a local church. Acts 2:47 Heb. 13:17 10:24-25
 - 2. Love one another with the love which you have received from Christ. v. 26 15:12 Eph. 4:2-3 I Pet. 4:10-11 I Co. 12:7f
- B. Unity can also be expressed through fellowship among local churches.
- C. Don't unnecessarily separate yourself from those who are united with Christ. Ro. 15:7
- D. Our unity will result in evangelistic outreach. v. 21-23
 - 1. Our loving unity testifies to outsiders that we are God's beloved people. v. 21 13:34-35 15:12
 - 2. We must also bring the Word into the world. v. 20
- E. Keys to unity. Eph. 4:1-6
 - 1. Unity is founded upon truth but undermined by error. Eph. 4:1,4-6
 - 2. Unity is promoted by humility but destroyed by pride. Eph. 4:2
 - 3. Unity is preserved with effort but weakened by laziness. Eph. 4:3

IV. The ultimate aim of our unity is God's glory. v. 22-24

- A. As we are united in Him, we display His glory. v. 22
- B. Our supreme hope is to be glorified in His presence. 14:3 I Jn. 3:2 Ro. 8:17 I Co. 13:12 I Th. 4:17 Phil. 1:21,23 Col. 3:4 Ps. 17:15 16:11 I Jn. 3:2

V. Concluding Applications.

Discussion questions

1. Why might Jesus' prayer in John 17 appropriately be called "The Lord's Prayer"?
2. How does this prayer resemble what most people call "The Lord's Prayer"?
3. What does Jesus pray for himself? John 17:1-5
4. Why does Jesus pray for His disciples? 17:6-10
5. What does Jesus pray for His disciples? 17:11-19
6. Upon what future events is Jesus' looking with certainty as He prays?
7. How do some people misunderstand Jesus' prayer for unity?
8. What is the nature of the unity for which Jesus prays?
9. How can we express the unity for which Jesus prays?
10. What is the relationship between our unity and our evangelistic efforts?
11. What is the ultimate aim of our unity?