

A Study of the Christ Text

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus prays for Himself				17:1-5
Jesus prays for His disciples				17:6-19
Jesus prays for all believers				17:20-26

Overriding Principles

- The completion of Jesus' mission was ultimately to bring glory to the Father for His mercy and Grace.
- Jesus' concern for the Apostles was a reflection of His love and loyalty to those who serve Him.
- Jesus' prayer for all believers speaks to His enduring love for those who come to Him through the Gospel.
- Unity is one of the most important of all the things God values.
- Unity must be based on truth, a value even more significant than unity for unity can never be at the cost of truth.

Commentary

Jesus Prays for Himself (Jn. 17:1-5)

- Isaiah 42:8 and 48:11 declare God will not give His glory to another; Jesus sharing the Father's glory is a testimony to the fact that Jesus is God.
- Jesus' unselfish attitude is demonstrated in the fact He sought personal glory only to glorify the Father (cf. Isa. 49:3; Phil. 2:9).
- The authority invested in the Christ signaled a new dispensation (cf. Isa. 9:6-7; Dan. 7:13-14; Matt. 11:27; 28:18; I Cor. 15:24-28).
- In the Old Covenant, eternal life is also related to knowing God (e.g. Jer. 31:34).
- Destruction comes with the lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6).
- The knowledge of God through all the earth is a grand theme of the predicted Age of the Messiah (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).
- Knowing God, however, does not refer simply to intellectual knowledge or "head knowledge."
- Living, intimate fellowship is the only way to truly know God—relationship rules (I Jn. 1:7)!
- Jesus being the Son of the Father "the only true God" does not disassociate Him from being God (cf. Jn. 1:1, 18), nor does it give Him an inferior status (Col. 2:9), rather it speaks to Jesus' "separate" association in the flesh (Jn. 1:14; Phil. 2:5-11). The "rest of the story"

is in John 17:5 where Jesus anticipates the glory He shared with the Father, "before the world was." At the time of the prayer in John 17, He had emptied Himself, but He would later be restored (cf. Phil. 2:5-11).

Jesus Prays for His Disciples (Jn. 17:6-19)

- Jesus' prayer includes reference to God's name in verse six, (cf. v. 26). The idea deals both with the place of God's presence (cf. Ex. 3:13-15; Deut. 12:5, 21) and with a commitment to living true to the nature of God's identity (Ps. 9:10). Jesus would fulfill both concepts (Jn. 2:19-21; Matt. 11:27-30; Jn. 14:8-9).
- Jesus was the ultimate spokesman for God (cf. Deut. 18:18; Heb. 1:1-2).
- Holiness is a primary attribute of God (cf. Lev. 11:44; 19:2; Ps. 71:22; 111:9; Isa. 6:3).
 - Holiness represents God's completely perfect, perfectly balanced separateness from all else. We are called to be faithful to this perfect standard (Lev. 19:2; Matt. 5:48).
 - For the Jew, God's holiness was a thing that created distance, to Jesus it was something to be shared in an intimate relationship.
 - God is different in the most profound and good way possible (cf. Matt. 19:17).
- The "power of God's name" deals with His unassailable power by which He can deliver His people from any foe (cf. Ps. 54:1; 44:5; 54:1; 124:8).
- To invest one with your name, as God did to Jesus, is to endorse what the invested person does. With Jesus, this investiture is absolute (Phil. 2:9-10; Rev. 19:12; Heb. 1:1-3).
- Jesus protects His own (cf. Jn. 10:27-30).
- Judas, styled as "the son of destruction," was, according to the Semitic idiom, "son of," one who characterized or personified the things associated with destruction (cf. Jn. 8:44).
- John 13:18 cites Psalm 41:10, Acts 1:20 refers to Psalm 69:25 and 109:8 to show how Scripture predicted Judas' betrayal.
- Moses, Elijah, and Jonah all asked to be taken from the world in times of difficulty (Num. 11:15; I Kg. 19:4; Jon. 4:3, 8); at the times they asked, however, they were not removed. God had work for them to do and challenges to overcome. Similarly, Jesus does not ask that His disciples be taken from the world, but rather that they would be protected from Satan.
- "Sanctification" is from the same root as "holiness." Jesus requires that those who follow Him are people of integrity and holiness. They are to reflect their God as they are transformed by the word of God.

- The sense of the Greek in John 17:17, when the presence and absence of the definite article are considered, leads to the following equivalent, "Sanctify them by the standard of Your truth, Your word has the quality of truthful trustworthiness."
- The mission Jesus' gives to his disciples is a continuation of the mission the Father gave to Him.
- In addition to Jesus setting Himself apart for the sake of Father, He also did so for the sake of the Apostles (cf. Mk. 14:24; Jn. 6:51; I Cor. 11:24).

Jesus Prays for All Believers (Jn. 17:20-26)

- God's covenants contemplate many generations of followers (cf. Deut. 29:14-15).
- Unity testifies to fellowship, which is the result of a responsive faith and love.
- The absence of unity speaks to a lack of fellowship and a failure of both faith and love.
- The reality of Jesus' mission of atonement will not be given creditability when it is represented by a disunited group of "followers."
- The perfect example of unity is seen between the Father and the Son.
- Jesus wants believers to enjoy the same glory that He has shared with the Father before the world was.
- Even though the Father's plan will soon lead to the death of Jesus, Jesus declares that the Father is righteous—the Son finds no fault with the Father's plan.
- Jesus strongly desired that God's love would dwell within His followers.
- Additionally, Jesus wanted to dwell within His followers.
 - The "infleshing" of Jesus in His body the church is a dominate New Covenant theme (Eph. 3:16-17; Col. 1:24-29; Gal. 2:20; 4:19 II Cor. 3:18).
 - Christ-likeness rules in the kingdom of the Christ (Rom. 8:29).

Who is Jesus?

- He is the one who sought glory for the primary purpose of bringing glory to the Father.
- He is the protector of His own.
- He is our salvation.
- He extends grace while insisting on holiness in the truth.
- He insists on unity founded in truth as He also requires unity be like the relationship of truth and love He enjoys with the Father.
- He would live in us to use our flesh to continue His work.