

John 17

“What Jesus Prays For Us.”^a

^a Every Sunday in September.

WHAT JESUS PRAYS FOR US

Week One

GOALS

- To gain a deeper understanding of Jesus and what's important to him.
- To allow these truths to shape our behaviors'.
- To grow in the unity that God calls us to as a small group.

TIPS

- This series is about Jesus, prayer and unity.
- It is a great discipleship opportunity to point people toward observing the behavior of Jesus (as we study the scripture) and then apply it to our lives (as we discuss how we can model our behaviors on what we see Jesus doing).
- Try and ensure you leave enough time for prayer in these evenings. It is an important focus of the studies and therefore having time to pray in the evening is appropriate and may be very fruitful for your small group.

HEADLINES

This is a reminder that John's gospel includes the longest account – chapters 14 to 16 - of Jesus speaking exclusively to his disciples. These 3 chapters record Jesus sharing at length those insights that will define and drive the mission that he will entrust to them through his death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.

Having spoken of his identity and authority as the son of God, he now demonstrates it firsthand to his disciples in the longest prayer recorded by any gospel writer. The entirety of John 17 is Jesus praying. This is not what we know as The Lord's Prayer, which he gave to his disciples primarily as a pattern for them to follow. Rather, it is one of the most profoundly intimate glimpses we are given into the Trinity. It is a unique insight into how Jesus himself engaged in prayer with his heavenly father; a breath-taking culmination of all that he has just been teaching them. What is more, it is a prayer of Jesus the great high priest, the one who is the ultimate mediator between a holy God and sinful humans.

(Group leader tip: it is helpful to have read through John 13 – John 16 before small group, so as to have an overview of the events building up to John 17.)

PRAYER

Small group leader:

Father God, thank you for bringing us here tonight. Please give us wisdom and insights as we focus on your truths about Jesus and prayer. Let our conversations bring you glory and us closer to you and each other. Amen.

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. Break into groups of 2 or 3 and talk briefly about some of the things you remember that happened leading up to Jesus' betrayal (John 13-16). (The purpose of this is to give context to John 17.)
2. Read together from John 16:32 - John 17:6 (Twice if necessary.)
3. What stood out to you from this passage of scripture?

4. The words 'glory'/'glorify' appear 5 times in these verses. Why do you think this is so important to Jesus? How can we, likewise, bring God glory in our day-to-day lives?
5. Jesus provides us with a beautiful picture of eternal life in verse 3. What are some other views of heaven/eternity that people you have encountered believe? Why is an accurate view of eternity important for how we live?
6. What is one take-home truth from this evening that you feel you would like to implement immediately?

PRAY

Ask the group to pray for the other members of the group regarding some of the answers that came up in question 3 (how we can bring God glory in our lives) and question 6.