Agape House of Worship
Wednesday Bible Study – August 26, 2026

Study Series: "That You May Believe" A Journey Through the Gospel of John
Part 29: The High Priestly Prayer: Glory, unity, protection, mission

Text: John 17:1–26 **Teacher: Pastor Bimbola Lawore**

Introduction:
John 17 is often called the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus. It takes place shortly before His arrest and crucifixion. After teaching His disciples to abide in Him (John 15) and teaching them about the Holy Spirit (John 16), Jesus turns to the Father and prays in John 17.

What makes this prayer so powerful is that Jesus is not primarily praying for His circumstances to change. He is praying that God's purpose would be fulfilled through Him and in His people.

The chapter can be understood through **three core prayers**:
1. "Glorify Me" — John 17:1–5
2. "Keep Them" — John 17:6–19
3. "Make Them One" — John 17:20–26
These three prayers reveal Jesus' heart for Himself, His disciples, and His Church.

1. John 17:1-5 - Jesus prays for himself: Glorify your Son

John 17:1-5 "Father, the hour has come. **Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.** 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 **Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent**. 4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. (NIV)

Question: Why did Jesus make this request, glorify your son?

Jesus knew that "the hour" had come—the appointed time for His suffering, death, resurrection, and return to the Father. Yet, in the face of the cross, Jesus' greatest concern was the glory of God. (vs 1)

He understood that His life and His death were part of a greater divine assignment.

Question: What is Eternal life?

Eternal life is more than living forever or receiving blessings. Eternal life is knowing God through Jesus Christ. It is about having a personal relationship with God. **(vs 3)**

1 John 5:11-12 "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

Jesus first prayer reminds us that God's glory must be the ultimate purpose of our lives. A successful life is not simply a life filled with accomplishments; it is a life that fulfills God's assignment.

Question: Have you ever struggled with God's assignment vs your accomplishments? Matthew 26:39

2. John 17:6-19- Jesus Prays For His Disciples: "Holy Father Keep them"

Prayer for their Protection:
Jesus then turns His attention to His disciples. He knows He is leaving them physically, while they remain in a hostile world. Jesus does not ask the Father to remove His disciples from the world. He asks Him to protect them while they remain in it.

John 17:9-11 "I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. 11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one."

John 17:15 "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one"

Question: Is this prayer still relevant? In what ways are believers' protection threatened in our days?

Pray for their Sanctification:
John 17:17 "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." (NIV)
John 17:17 "Sanctify them [purify, consecrate, separate them for Yourself, make them holy] by the Truth; Your Word is Truth." (AMPC)

1 Corinthians 6:11 "And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."

John 17:18: Then Jesus says: "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world."
This reveals an important truth: **We are not sanctified merely to sit; we are sanctified to be sent.**

3. Jesus prays for all believers "That they may all be one" – John 17:20-26

Jesus' Prayer for Unity
The final section of the prayer is especially powerful because Jesus looks beyond His immediate disciples. He thought of us, the harvest of disciples' mission work. Jesus was praying for future generations of believers who would come to faith through the testimony of His disciples.

John 17:20-22 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, **[21] that all of them may be one,** Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. **May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.** **[22]** I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one

Jesus places enormous importance on **the unity of His people**. **Unity is connected to witness.**
When the Church walks in love, unity, humility, and cooperation, the world gets a clearer picture of Christ.

Question – What does Unity of believers look like to you? Psalm 133.

Conclusion: John 17 gives us a glimpse into the heart of Jesus just before the cross. His prayer teaches us that our greatest concerns should not merely be: "Lord, make my life easier" but rather Jesus prayer should challenge every believer to live and pray within these three priorities:

- Lord, glorify Yourself through my life."
- Lord, keep me faithful and sanctify me through Your truth
- Lord, help Your people walk together in love and unity."