

# Connect360: Jesus Prays for Us

August 1, 2022

- *Lesson 8 in the Connect360 unit “Prayer That Moves Heaven: Power With Purpose” focuses on John 17:20-26.*

Many scholars refer to John 17 as the high priestly prayer of Jesus. They also see three distinct segments in the prayer. In the first two segments, Jesus introduced ideas that make our focal passage for today (17:20-26) even more meaningful.

First, Jesus prayed about himself (John 17:1-5). He looked upward, heavenly, and prayed, “Father, the hour has come.” He asked God to glorify him, which meant that Jesus was ready to finish his mission. Jesus knew people were going to experience eternal life through him. Jesus offered one definition of what “eternal life” meant: “that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3). Such knowledge is not casual acquaintance; instead, it involves a deep bonding of faith and love with the eternal God as your Heavenly Father and Jesus as your Savior and Lord. Jesus’ sense of purpose, introduced in John 1:12-13 and wonderfully stated in John 3:16, continued through the final hours of Jesus’ earthly life.

Then Jesus prayed for his disciples (John 17:6-19). He knew life would be hard for them. They had been with Jesus for three years, and soon he’d be gone. Jesus told them earlier (John 14:15-16) God would provide them another companion and comforter (Holy Spirit). Though they did not yet realize it, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit would be the common denominator, the unifying presence and power among them and all believers.

Jesus prayed God would protect them and would sanctify them for their

experience with adversity, but also for their ability to continue Christ's mission in the world. A key prayer request occurs in the midst of this section: "so that they may be one as we are one" (John 17:11). Jesus also prayed that his disciples would have "the full measure of my joy within them" (John 17:13)—what a prayer thought less than 24 hours before Jesus' death. He closed the prayer by praying for all who would become believers, including you and me.

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