



**DeoGloria**  
Community Church  
Rockingham

# KNOWING HIM & GROWING

## G

GO TO GOD IN PRAYER DAILY

## R

READ GOD'S WORD DAILY

## O

OBEY GOD, MOMENT BY MOMENT

## W

WITNESS FOR CHRIST BY YOUR LIFE

## T

TRUST GOD FOR EVERY DETAIL OF YOUR LIFE

## H

HOLY SPIRIT CONTROL YOUR DAILY LIFE



# CONTENTS

|   | Page No |
|---|---------|
| Introduction  | 5       |
|   |         |
| <b>Week 1: Witnessing to a Hostile World</b>                |         |
| Personal Study  | 9       |
| Group Discussion  | 15      |
|   |         |
| <b>Week 2: The Spirit of Truth</b>                          |         |
| Personal Study  | 19      |
| Group Discussion  | 26      |
|   |         |
| <b>Week 3: From Sorrow to Joy</b>                           |         |
| Personal Study  | 31      |
| Group Discussion  | 37      |
|   |         |
| <b>Week 4: The Hope that overcomes the world</b>            |         |
| Personal Study  | 41      |
| Group Discussion  | 47      |
|   |         |
| <b>Week 5: Eternal life – To know God and to know Jesus</b> |         |
| Personal Study  | 51      |
| Group Discussion  | 56      |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Week 6: Praying to the Father</b>        |     |
| Personal Study                              | 61  |
| Group Discussion                            | 68  |
|   |     |
| <b>Week 7: Salvation secured in God</b>     |     |
| Personal Study                              | 73  |
| Group Discussion                            | 79  |
|   |     |
| <b>Week 8: Protect us from the evil one</b> |     |
| Personal Study                              | 83  |
| Group Discussion                            | 89  |
|   |     |
| <b>Week 9: Glorifying God by being one</b>  |     |
| Personal Study                              | 93  |
| Group Discussion                            | 100 |
|   |     |
| Memory Verses                               | 103 |
|   |     |
| Resources                                   | 105 |
|   |     |

# INTRODUCTION

We are continuing with our study of the farewell message of Jesus, with John 16 and 17.

In chapter 16 Jesus talks about the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus warned His disciples of coming opposition because He did not want them to be surprised and shocked by it. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples when He departed. This is why His departure would be to their advantage. Jesus meant that the presence and work of the Holy Spirit would be better for believers than only the physical, bodily presence of Jesus. Their sorrow would turn to joy.

In chapter 17 we find the High Priestly prayer of Jesus. Warren Wiersbe describes it as follows: *"...the greatest prayer ever prayed on earth and the greatest prayer recorded anywhere in Scripture. John 17 is certainly the "holy of holies" of the Gospel record, and we must approach this chapter in a spirit of humility and worship. To think that we are privileged to listen in as God the Son converses with His Father just as He is about to give His life as a ransom for sinners! No matter what events occurred later that evening, this prayer makes it clear that Jesus was and is the Overcomer. He was not a "victim"; He was and is the Victor!"*

What an encouragement this prayer should have been to the disciples! He prayed about their security, their joy, their unity, and their future glory! He also prayed it for us today, so that we would know all that He has done for us and given to us, and all that He will do for us when we get to heaven.

We pray that, as you do this study, you will be encouraged to grow in your faith and in your relationship with the Lord.

***Soli Deo Gloria***

**Week 1**

**Witness in the midst  
of a hostile world**

**Memory Verse:**

*When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.*

*John 15:26-27*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 15:26-27 and John 16:1-4**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

If you have done the previous study *In Christ*, you will know that in John 13-17, Jesus gives His last teaching and instructions to His disciples and us His followers. He places particular emphasis on the love He has for His own, the love that exists between Father and Son and the love we must have for Jesus and one another.

In John 15:18-25 Jesus opens the curtain of what is going on in the world in which His followers live. Love for God is in direct opposition to the world that is under the authority of the devil (1 John 5:19). The devil came to steal and kill (John 10:10).

Therefore, when people like us choose to become believers and are driven by the love of Christ, Jesus promises the world will hate us. And we see it all over the world today. We are silenced, because what we do and say are not seen as politically correct. And it is not going to get any easier. It is in such a world, a world that even kills people if they dare to talk about Christ, that Jesus says

He gives us a Helper. And this helper is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will help us to witness to a hostile world about the love of God for this world.

Yes, maybe the old methods of being church no longer works. Maybe we should think anew, but we can never stop witnessing. The message, the good news, will never be silenced. Jesus himself says that His followers cannot remain silent, because if they remain silent, the stones will cry out (Luke 19:40).

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### **Read John 15:26-27**

What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

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In next week's study we will learn much more about the work of the Holy Spirit. But the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and therefore the testimony of Jesus' followers, is about Jesus. We are not called to testify about our good life, or good congregation, or our good experiences of preachers. Jesus and the work of Jesus must become such a part of us, that it becomes our testimony. What Jesus regularly

teaches us, how He changes us and loves the world and wants to transform it, is supposed to be the testimony on our lips.

What does it mean to testify?

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According to Louw & Nida, the Greek word ***maturia***, where our word martyr comes from, means "*to provide information about a person or an event concerning which the speaker has direct knowledge of.*"

With all the other things that the Holy Spirit will come to do, He will give us strength and we will be His witnesses. We do not always have to witness through striking words. Francis of Assisi said that we should preach through our lives and, if necessary, "use words."

That does not mean we should never talk. If we, had a personal experience of Jesus, we would like to tell others about it. And then we can say, "It's true, and I know it." In everything the Holy Spirit will be our helper.

**John 15:18, 22-24 and John 16:1-4**

Write your spontaneous impressions of these verses below.

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According to John 15: 22 and 24 what is the reason why the world hates Jesus? What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do in verse 26?

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Jesus teaches His disciples that believers are not of the world and are therefore hated. Jesus says that the world would hate His followers, but if they were of the world, the world would have accepted them. The world accepts only those who go along with the cultural flow. Anything that disrupts the status quo is rejected. Following Jesus is a whole new and different way of life, different from the way the world works. To help His followers to live in this world as believers, Jesus promises that "help is here," the Holy Spirit will help us, His followers, to witness about Jesus in a hostile world.

## **CLOSING REMARKS:**

Jesus does not warn His disciples that the world will hate and persecute and even kill them, to frighten them, but to prepare them. The fact is that followers of Jesus have been hated by the world throughout the ages. The world hates Christians because they are not part of it, because they do not follow the culture of the world. Because they are not controlled by worldliness.

The world hates believers because the world hated Jesus first. Although believers will experience sorrow, they will find joy in the helper, the Holy Spirit. Despite the sadness of Jesus' death, Jesus' followers will find joy in the victory over sin, the world, and death. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would come and glorify Him and reveal the truth to the disciples.

## **PRAYER**

Pray that those who are persecuted and hated by the world will find courage and allow the helper, the Holy Spirit, to guide and comfort them.

Pray that we as believers will find joy in the Holy Spirit who helps, guides, and teaches us.

Ask the Holy Spirit daily to guide and teach you so that you will remain obedient notwithstanding opposition.  
Pray for a life of victory regardless of your circumstances.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.*

*John 15:26-27*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 15:26-27 and 16:1-4

## Discussion questions

Read John 15:26-27. What is the work of the Holy Spirit according to this passage?

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What is a witness? What does it mean to testify about Jesus?

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Read John 16:1-3. From which unexpected group does Jesus say they will also experience persecution? How do you experience persecution or opposition today – from church members and/or the world?

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Read John 16:4. How does Jesus encourage His disciples and us, His followers, in times of persecution and opposition?

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**Close in prayer**

# The Spirit of Truth

**Memory Verse:**

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

*John 16:13*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 16:5-15**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

Remember Jesus is still teaching and encouraging His disciples in His last moments before His crucifixion. And then He says something I think they would not like to hear. *“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away.”* (John 16:7a). How can it be better that Jesus is no longer with us? In a nice way, I envy the disciples when I think that they had Jesus with them. Yet He says, *“it’s better if I go away.”* Every time I visit Israel, Capernaum is one of the highlights of the visit. It is wonderful to stand in the ruins of a 4th century synagogue, built on top of the 1st century synagogue. This is where Jesus himself stood and taught people.

Imagine having Jesus as your mentor. Imagine being able to sit down one night and have a long conversation with Him, ask Him questions, and get answers. Imagine asking Him to help you with some of your problems. Imagine being able to even shake His hand. Yet Jesus says *“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away”* but then He says why. *“Unless I go away, the Counsellor*

*will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.”*  
(John 16:7b)

You and I are in a better position than Jesus' disciples, who could live and talk to Jesus in Israel for years. Why? Because He sent us the Holy Spirit, the Helper. He does the same work that Jesus did, except in some ways it is even better than having Jesus with us!

We confess that we believe in the Holy Spirit, there is so much to say about Him, but this week we are only going to look at a few aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

**Read John 14:15-17, 16:8-9, 13, 14 and 15**

What is the work of the Holy Spirit according to these verses?

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- Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will dwell in his followers. (John 14: 15-17). Living with Jesus will have

some disadvantages. Jesus sometimes left. He took time to pray alone. He had to sleep. If they were in Galilee and He was in Judea, they would have to wait until He returns. But Jesus says that the Spirit is different. He, the Helper, the Advocate, the Comforter, will always be with us, in us. In our darkest moment, He is as real as the breath in our lungs.

- In John 16:8, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would condemn the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. After the disciples were empowered by the Holy Spirit and a large crowd gathered to see what had happened, Peter got up, full of the Spirit and began to preach to them. After his sermon, the Holy Spirit convinced them of their sin, and their hearts were all touched. They felt so guilty about their sin that more than 3,000 of them, repented. Many more unbelievers were convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit. Paul was one of them. After being saved, he travelled the world to win souls for Jesus. Throughout the ages, there have been countless testimonies of people so convinced by the Holy Spirit of sin that they have made a 180 degree turn back to God.
- The Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of Truth. One of His more important functions is to guide and teach believers in the Truth. He teaches us the truths about God. The Spirit takes us deeper and deeper into God's Word. We

grow as He makes Scripture clear to us. We learn more and more about what God is like, and then He leads us to get to know God even better and deeper.

- The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus. And the way He glorifies Christ is by showing or revealing to us all that belongs to Christ - all about His person, His life, His work, His character, His love and His power. He glorifies Christ by making Him a reality for us and showing us how much Christ loves us.

What does it mean that the Holy Spirit convict the world of guilt regarding sin?

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Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will convict the world in regard of sin. To convict means to put the truth of the Gospel in such a clear light that people can accept or reject it intelligently.

Jesus says that the root of all sins is "because they do not believe in Me." (Verse 9). People may not think that not believing in Jesus is a sin. But Jesus calls it the sin of which the Holy Spirit will convict the world. The point is, they have rejected God's Son, whose death is the only solution to our sin problem.

If someone were to fall overboard in the middle of the ocean, it does not matter if he is a good swimmer or if he could not swim at all. It would only be a matter of time until he drowned, because no one is good enough to swim thousands of miles to the shore. But if a lifeguard throws a lifeline at him, the question is no longer whether he can swim or not. All that can save him is that he must grab the lifeline. When he says: "No thank you, I am a good swimmer; I do not need a lifebuoy," he will drown. All that will save the swimmer or the person who cannot swim at all, is that they must grab the lifeline and leave the rest to the lifeguard.

Jesus is the saviour God has given to the world. Self-righteous people can say they do not need a saviour; they are good enough to save themselves. But they will be lost if they do not believe in Christ. The worst sinners may think that they are not worthy to be saved. No one is. Good and bad people are all lost without Jesus. The sin of all people is the rejection of the salvation of Jesus.

## **CLOSING REMARKS:**

We can divide the entire history of God's journey with His people into three main sections.

- The time when the work of God the Father was more prominent before Jesus came. The big test then was whether the people worshiped "the one God who rules over all."
- When Jesus was born, the period in which God the Son was more prominent began. The great test then was whether the people "who knew the Father would recognize Him in the incarnate Son."
- And now we are in the third period. Jesus ascended to heaven and now the work of God the Holy Spirit is more prominent. "The Holy Spirit is now continuing the work of the Father and of the Son."

Just as Israel of old had a special responsibility to know and honour God as Father and just as the people of Palestine had a special responsibility to know and honour Jesus as the Son of God, we now also have a special responsibility to know and honour the Holy Spirit.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God that He knows better and that it is better for us that Jesus is back in Heaven, and that His Spirit is in us and with us.

Ask the Holy Spirit daily to convict you of sin in your life and ask Him to forgive you and teach you how to overcome your sin.

Thank the Holy Spirit that He teaches us the truth and nothing but the truth through His Word.

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and teach you to glorify Jesus in your everyday life.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*

*John 16:13*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 16:5-15`

## Discussion questions

Read John 15:7. How is it an advantage for Jesus's disciples and us that He goes away?

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Read John 16:8-11. How does the Holy Spirit convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgement? How have you experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit in your life? Discuss.

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Read John 16:13. How does the Holy Spirit guide the disciples in all the truth? What does He specifically help them to do? How does He lead you in truth?

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Read John 15:14-15. How does the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus? How does the Holy Spirit glorify Jesus in your life?

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**Close in prayer**



# From Sorrow to Joy!

**Memory Verse:**

*...Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.*

*John 16:22*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 16:16-24**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

Jesus now turns his conversation about His departure away from the Spirit who will replace Him, to the resurrection and the unbounded joy it will evoke.

He uses the words, "*in a little while,*" because He wanted to stress that the sorrow they will experience when He dies will not last forever. At His resurrection, the sorrow will be replaced with a joy that will last forever.

Jesus mentions joy in 6 verses in his conversation with his disciples, focusing on permanent joy.

We easily settle for the temporary things of this world, the here and now. Hoping, expecting that they will fill the void which only God can fill. Allow this study to transform your perspective on the here and now, by seeing the glory of God's eternal blessing which gives joy. Do not settle for less.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

**Read John 16:16-18 and Acts 10:40-41.**

What did Jesus mean in John 16:16-17? What will happen upon His resurrection?

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**Read John 16:17-19, John 7:33, John 16:28, John 13:3, Mark 16:19, Luke 22:69, Acts 5:31 and Romans 8:34**

What do these scriptures say about Jesus being with the Father?

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Part of the disciples transitioning from sorrow to joy was to understand the reality of the rich implications in the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus returning to the Father, including:

- Jesus will return to heaven, to be with the Father who sent Him.
- Jesus is seated with the Father, ruling in power.
- Jesus is leading, forgiving and saving people.
- Jesus is praying for us.

**Read John 16:20 and Isaiah 53:1-12**

What is significant about the two responses regarding Jesus' death and resurrection?

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There were two reactions to the death of Jesus. The first was the world rejoicing, thinking, good riddance, who is this Jesus anyway?

Alternately, the disciples' reaction was sadness. They mourned, wailed, grieved, they were broken, crushed, and felt defeated because their relationship with Jesus was strong. They listened to every word He taught, they left everything to follow Him, they loved Him.

**Read John 16:21-22**

Why does Jesus refer to the "sorrow" (John 16:21) of a woman in labour?

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Jesus uses an example here that everyone will understand. A mother understands that the joy of having

a child outweighs all the pain of childbirth. A few moments of pain versus a lifetime of joy. So, what is temporary, is often painful. Jesus' pain on the cross was short lived as He rose again.

You see, there is always a certain amount of pain on the way to life. Jesus is just explaining that the suffering is nothing compared to the joy that will follow.

**Read John 16:23-24**

What promise is repeated in 16:23 and 24? What benefit would the apostles receive from this promise?

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**Read John 15:9-11**

What three things did Jesus say in John 15:9-11 will give us complete joy?

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**CLOSING REMARKS:**

When Jesus speaks of joy, He also tells his disciples to ask for anything and the Father will give it to them. The word “anything” pertains to any spiritual blessing which the Father promises.

It is human to think that living through trials and negative circumstances would not be a reason for joy. Choosing to respond to life’s difficult situations with inner contentment and satisfaction does not seem to make sense. Joy is a choice! But the Lord is the originator of true joy.

The word joy, “chara”, means great happiness. So, to remain in His love, is to recognise that Jesus is the source of true joy. Keeping His commands gives joy which is expressed through love for Him and love for others.

This new joy will bring two things too believers: a new understanding of the Father's message, as well as a new way of speaking to the Father.

Joy is a spiritual blessing. Ask the Father for true joy and He will give it.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for being the source of true joy. Ask Him to help you to stay in Him.

Thank Him for all the blessings and joy in your life.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to find inner contentment and joy, even in times of trials and tribulations.

Thank the Holy Spirit for helping you to overcome sin and temptation.

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and teach you to glorify Jesus in your everyday life and to choose joy.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*... Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.*

*John 16:22*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 16:16-24

## Discussion questions

Read John 16:16-17. What did Jesus mean? What will happen upon His resurrection?

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Read John 16: 21-22. A woman's labour pain gives birth to a new life. What does Jesus' death on the cross accomplish? Why will "no one... take" the joy of Jesus' resurrection from His disciples?

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Read John 16:23. Will the Father really give us "whatever" (John 16:23) we ask in Jesus' name? Discuss.

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**Close in prayer**

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**Week 4**

# **The Hope that overcomes the world!**

**Memory Verse:**

*I have told you these things, so that in me you  
may have peace.*

*John 16:33a*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 16:15-33**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

What is hope? Is it a wishy washy maybe, or a kind of unsure optimism? The modern idea of hope is “to wish for, to expect, but without certainty of the fulfillment; to desire very much, but with no real assurance of getting your desire.” Therefore, to some people, the word *Hope*, does not have a positive meaning, because they think it lacks certainty and conviction.

However, in Scripture, according to the Hebrew and Greek words translated by the word “hope” and according to the biblical usage; hope is an indication of certainty. In the Bible, “Hope” means “a strong and confident expectation.”

Jesus was about to face the biggest challenge yet, death on the cross. The disciples were also about to face their biggest challenge, facing the world without Christ physically by their side. In last week’s lesson we saw that Jesus rose again and rules and that the disciples will not be alone. In this week’s lesson we will see how we can take courage because of Christ’s victory on the cross.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### **Read John 16:25-29**

What did Jesus tell his disciples plainly about His Father?  
How does knowing that the Father loves you give you hope?

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Up until now Jesus has been speaking in parables, now in plain simple words He shares the most important message to his disciples that anyone will hear: My Father loves you, there is hope.

### **Read John 16:27 and 30, Isaiah 43:10, 1 John 4:16 and 1 John 5:4**

In what way should people respond to God's love? What is the result of our response to God's love (refer to 1 John 4:16)?

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We respond to God's love through believing in Him. The word "believe" means to have faith and to entrust our entire lives to Him. When we believe in God through faith, we form a union, an eternal relationship which the world cannot overcome.

**Read John 16: 32-33a, Matthew 26:31, John 15:18-21 and John 14:27**

How did Jesus say the disciples will react when He leaves?

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In what ways do Christians face tribulation in this world?

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What does Jesus promise to those who believe in Him?  
Why is this important?

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The word peace (Eirene) implies three things:

- "binding or joining together again of that which had been separated or divided"

- It conveys the sense of an inner rest, wellbeing and harmony. The ultimate peace is the state of reconciliation with God, effected by placing one's faith in the gospel.
- It is a condition of freedom from disturbance, whether outwardly, as of a nation from war or enemies or inwardly, as in the current context, within the soul. Peace implies health, well-being, and prosperity.

The world might wage a war against Christians, but we have been united with Christ, therefore securing a sense of peace amidst difficulty.

**Read John 16:33b, Daniel 10:19, Ephesians 6:10,  
1 John 4:4 and 1 John 5:4**

What does Jesus tell us to do when facing a difficult world because of our faith? What will the reason for our courage be?

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**CLOSING REMARKS:**

Fear is often our natural response to change or uncertainty. We do not have to think of all our reasons to be afraid; fear comes unbidden. But being strong and courageous does not come naturally. Often, we must think through different reasons why we ought to overcome our fears with courage. God calls us to take courage, to fight for it.

John 16 concludes with a climax, a victory perspective. Despite tribulation and hardship that will test their courage, the true follower of Jesus must be encouraged, for He has overcome through His death and resurrection.

We may not only try to survive, but we must overcome; we must not only try to stand firm, but we must also achieve victory in every area of our lives, because we have found peace in Jesus Christ. Salvation brings peace, joy and a life of victory.

John Piper notes that we should take heart because faith is fuel for courage. He adds that we are to have faith in God's promises. We have faith in Jesus who has overcome the world for us.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for your salvation.

Thank Him for sending His Son to die on the cross for your sin.

Thank Him for Jesus' resurrection and for the peace that we have in Him.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to find peace and joy, even in times of trials and tribulations.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to take heart and to be encouraged by His promises.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace.*

*John 16:33a*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 16:25-33

## Discussion questions

Read John 16:25-28. What did Jesus tell his disciples about His Father? How does knowing that the Father loves you give you hope?

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Read John 16: 28. What does Jesus mean by, "Again, I leave the world and go to the Father"? What does this mean for us practically?

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Read John 16:31-33. What does "the world" (John 16:33) have in store for Jesus' followers? How are Christians to deal with it?

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Do you think it is possible to be joyful in times of tribulations? What made you hold onto your faith and hope? Discuss with the rest of the group.

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**Close in prayer**

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**Week 5**

# **Eternal life – To know God and to know Jesus!**

## **Memory Verse:**

*Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*John 17:3*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 17:1-5**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

Jesus concludes His farewell speech with an incredible prayer in chapter 17. Jesus has concluded His mission, has prepared His disciples to carry on without His physical presence, and is now about to leave. He prays to His Father - but this time in front of His disciples. Jan A du Rand writes that it is therefore more than a prayer. It is also an evaluation of His mission, a motivating statement of the task ahead - a peek into the heart of the Son of God.

It allows us, with awe, to have a peek into the unfathomable depth of the Godly Trinity and the close tie between Father and Son. The contents of this amazing prayer are not only an encouragement, but also a motivation for us who would “believe in me through their message”!

Quite often this prayer is called the High Priestly Prayer - because Jesus intercedes with God for His followers. The focus of the prayer is all about the Glory of God becoming visible on earth. Therefor one should not read this chapter on your feet, but on your knees, according to Du Rand!

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### **Read John 16:33.**

What was it that Jesus said just prior to His prayer?

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Jesus often went to pray in solitude - but this time He prays audible and in their sight. Compare these words with John 11:41 and Mark.7:34 - what do you learn about how Jesus prayed in public?

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### **Read John 17:1**

What "hour" had come that Jesus is referring to?

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What does Jesus mean by "Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You"?

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The events of the cross are described as glorification. So, when Jesus prays here that the Father should glorify the Son, He prays that the Father should show people how important and powerful He really is, that He is indeed the Lord. They will see it when Jesus rises from the dead. Like Thomas (John 20:28), they will then realize that Jesus is Lord and God.

It will also mean that the Son will glorify the Father, in other words, people will also be able to see in Jesus how important and powerful God is.

**Read John 17:2**

Who had the Father given Jesus power over?

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What would Jesus give to those who the Father gave Him?

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Describe in your own words what eternal life means.

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Everlasting *life* involves but does not equal everlasting *existence*, because everlasting existence also takes place

in hell. *Everlasting life* in the Bible refers to life that begins at salvation and lasts forever in heaven with God.

**Read John 17:3**

How did Jesus describe eternal life? What does the word *know* mean here?

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To have eternal life is to personally know the eternal, only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. It means having a personal relationship with Him through faith in Jesus Christ.

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

Eternal (everlasting) life is God's gift to those who believe in His Son. The Father gave His Son the authority to give eternal life to those whom the Father gave to the Son.

Eternal life is knowing God personally; not just knowing about Him but having a personal relationship with Him through faith in Jesus Christ. It is exciting that the believer does not have to wait for the second coming to receive the

eternal life as a gift of the end times - but may already experience it (see John 5:24).

However, we have a free will. We can refuse eternal life. Jesus purchased eternal life for all of mankind. Those who refuse to know Jesus as Saviour and Lord shall experience death, and not life. If we accept Jesus as personal Saviour and Lord, we have eternal life. We are free to choose but we need to make a choice.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for the gift of everlasting life.

Ask Him to help you to choose to live for Him daily.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to make time for a personal relationship with the Lord. Devote yourself, your life and your time to Him.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*John 17:3*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 17:1-5

## Discussion questions

Read John 17:1. What did Jesus ask the Father to do and what would He do for the Father? What *hour* has come?

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Read John 17:2. Over what did Jesus have authority, and what could He give?

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Read John 17:3. How did Jesus describe eternal life? What does this imply for believers?

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Do you think it is possible to know God and Jesus personally? How? Discuss in the group.

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**Close in prayer**



**Week 6**

**Praying to the  
Father!**

**Memory Verse:**

*After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven  
and prayed: Father...*

*John 17:1a*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 17:1-26**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

The Bible is filled with great prayers. We are impressed with Solomon's prayer (1 Kings 8), Abraham's prayer (Genesis 18), and Moses' prayer (Exodus 32), but this prayer of Jesus is by far the greatest recorded in the Bible.

Far beyond all that, was this prayer Jesus prayed unto His God and Father. This is the only long, continuous prayer of Jesus recorded in the Gospels.

Genuine prayer often reveals a person's innermost being. John 17 is a unique opportunity to see the nature and heart of Jesus. The sentences are simple, but the ideas are deep, moving, and meaningful. In this prayer, Jesus will touch on many themes, most of which He petitions while addressing His Father by Name. Thereby, many of the same topics of what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) are also found in this prayer.

- Jesus's prayers are directed to God the Father.
- There is recognition of and concern for God's name.
- There is concern for the work of the kingdom of God.
- There is concern for keeping from evil.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### **Read John 17:1**

Why did Jesus lift His eyes up to heaven?

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In the prayer customs of the Western world, we often bow our head and close our eyes. Jesus prayed according to the customs of prayer common in His own day. Jesus could have prayed this prayer silently, but He spoke it aloud so that all His disciples for all ages could hear. This magnificent prayer is certainly an example of the kind of communication that went on between the incarnate Son and the Father.

### **Compare Matthew 6:9 and John 17:1**

What address did He teach the disciples to use when praying? How does Jesus address His Father?

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Jesus taught the disciples to address God in prayer with, "Our Father in heaven" (Matthew 6: 9). He now uses only

"Father". The Aramaic background of this is "Abba" (cf. Mark 14:36), which was used and is still being used, in households by children to address their father. When Jesus addresses God in this way, it testifies to the intimate relationship between the Son and His Father.

**Read John 17:5**

Why does Jesus ask the Father to glorify Him?

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Before the Creation, the Father and Son existed in shared glory. At the ascension of Christ, Jesus was both glorified and transfigured. He was restored to His rightful place.

**Read John 17:11 and Philippians 2:9**

What did Jesus pray the Father would do for the apostles in verse 11?

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Why is the Name of Jesus so powerful?

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Jesus knows He is about to leave His believers behind in a very tough world. He can foresee the upcoming persecution and every temptation they are going to face. He knows how the Deceiver will work to divide His disciples and so He prays for their protection by appealing to the power of God's Name.

**Read John 17:21**

Explain the sense in which Jesus and His Father are "one."

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In Week 9 we will further discuss what Jesus means when He prays that they may be one, as He is one with the Father.

**Read John 17:24**

What blessing did Jesus request for the disciples from His Father?

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**Read John 17:25**

What adjective was the Father called by in verse 25?  
What does righteous mean (Refer to Psalm 58:11)?

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What did Jesus know that the world did not know? What did His disciples know? (Think how does this relate to verse 3)?

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### **CLOSING REMARKS:**

St John Chrysostom once said: *“There is nothing more worthwhile than to pray to God and to converse with him, for prayer unites us with God as his companions. As our bodily eyes are illuminated by seeing the light, so in contemplating God our soul is illuminated by him.”*

Jesus set the perfect example. Before his three decisive moments (Baptism, Transfiguration, and Passion) Jesus prayed. He also prayed before three other decisive moments involving the apostles (his choosing them, his commissioning of Peter, and his prayer that Peter’s faith would not fail).

One question we have found that many Christians have about their prayer life with the Lord is who exactly should they be directing their personal prayers to – God the Father, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit?

Jesus Himself teaches us to direct all our personal prayers direct to God the Father. But in John 16:23-24 Jesus gives us one more key piece of revelation. Not only must you pray direct to God the Father, but Jesus now wants those prayers to be done “in His Name.” In other words, pray direct to God the Father in the Name of Jesus.

Praying direct to God the Father in the Name of Jesus means you recognize and realize that it is only through Jesus and His sacrificial death on the cross that we now have direct access to both Him and His Father in heaven.

Prayer is one of the strongest ways to communicate with God. “*There is no greater privilege for anyone that being able to personally talk with and speak into the ears of the Almighty God.*” (Stephen & Alex Kendrick, Battle plan for Prayer.) Jesus set us the example to follow.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for being your Heavenly Father.

Thank Him for His love and mercy.

Thank Him for sending His Son to prepare the way for you to have a personal relationship with Him.

Talk to the Father, in the name of the Son.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: Father....*

*John 17:1a*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 17:1-26

## Discussion questions

Read John 17:1. Jesus lifted His eyes up to heaven to pray. Do you think there is a specific way we should pray? Why? Discuss in the group.

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Compare John 17:1 and Matthew 6:9. How does Jesus address His Father and what address did He teach the disciples to use? What does it teach us about the relationship between Jesus and the Father and our relationship with God?

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Read John 17:24. What blessing did Jesus request for the disciples from His Father?

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Read John 17:25. What did Jesus know that the world did not know? What did His disciples know? (Think how this relates to verse 3). Why is this important. Discuss.

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**Close in prayer**



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**Week 7**

# Salvation secured in God!

**Memory Verse:**

*They knew with certainty that I came from you,  
and they believed that you sent me.*

*John 17:8b*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 17:6-12**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

In John 17:6–8, we hear Jesus sharing about His mission here on earth. Jesus came to tell the people who God is (He came to reveal His Name). An important theme in this Gospel is that God's people are saved. Those who belong to Him, He gives to Jesus and Jesus preserves them by giving them eternal life. The idea is that here on earth are several people who belong to God. However, they are trapped in darkness. Now God is sending his Son to gather them. This is what Jesus did. Eventually God will take all these people to Him to live with Him forever.

The danger is to see salvation as something God does alone. Of course, the salvation goes forth from God (John 3:16), but God has put man in a position to accept or deny Him; otherwise, the calls of Jesus that the people should believe in Him make no sense. Finally, one knows that you belong to God if you accept Jesus. It forms two sides of the same coin.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

## Read John 17:6

What was the first aspect of Jesus' mission on earth?

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In this part of the prayer, the "Name" plays an important role. It indicates the essence and work of God, and all that God has revealed concerning Him. The "Name" refers to God Himself and all that He has revealed for the salvation of man. This revelation of God can only be known by accepting its proclamation through Jesus Christ. There is no other way to the true knowledge of the Name of God.

Christ declares that He has given His own the revelation of the Father's name. The Old Testament Jew knew God as "Jehovah," the great I AM (Exodus 3:11–14). Jesus took this sacred Name "I AM" and made it meaningful to His disciples: "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35); "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12); "I am the Good Shepherd" (John 10:11); etc. In other words, Jesus revealed the Father's gracious Name by showing His disciples that He was everything they needed.

But the Father's Name includes much more than this, for Jesus also taught His disciples that God—the great I AM—was their Heavenly Father. The word Father is used 53 times in John 13–17, and 122 times in John's Gospel! In His messages to the Jews, Jesus made it clear that the Father sent Him, that He was equal to the Father, and that His words and works came from the Father. Gradually, by His words and His deeds, He revealed to them the nature of God, as they were able to bear it (John 16:12). It was a clear claim to Deity, but the Jews refused to believe.

**Read John 17:7-8**

What was the result of Jesus' declaring the Father's Name to the world, for those who believe Jesus?

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Jesus declares that in this world there is a group of believers who accepted His message. Now Jesus proceeds to pray for the needs and protection of His followers who are going to stay behind in this world when He returns to heaven.

**Read John 17:9-12**

What significant distinction does Jesus make in verse 9.  
Who does He pray for?

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That Jesus does not pray for the world does not mean that a Christian should not pray for the world. Jesus only says that his prayer here is specifically for the family of God, for those who belong to God. What He is asking here is meant for them. Through their actions the power of Jesus will become clear in this world (17:10).

What is His motivation to pray for His followers according to verse 10a?

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What is the reason that Jesus prays for His followers according to vs 10b - 11a?

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The reason is that Jesus goes back to his Father. The believers will then be left alone. Jesus prays for the demands it will place on them in a hostile world (see John 15:19b.)

What is Jesus' specific request from His Father (verses 11b–12).

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Jesus' petition that the Father will protect them safely was not only for their own sake, but also for the sake of God Himself (17:11). After all, believers are part of God's family. Their interests are intertwined. If one member of the family gets hurt, the whole family gets hurt.

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

Jesus says here that one can no longer think of God apart from his family, nor of the family apart from God. Their interests flow together. In this context, Jesus speaks of the unity between believer and God. It is not a unity in which the believers now suddenly become little gods themselves. The believers become children of God living in his family. Precisely because God as their Father now becomes important to them, his will becomes the most important to them. They then think like the Father and act as the Father expects of them. When people look at them,

it should become clear to everyone that they are children of God. Therein lies their unity with the Father.

When Jesus leaves, the believers will be without the protection He has given them. No one could snatch them out of Jesus' hand (John 10:28). Now Jesus prays that no one snatches them out of the Father's hand (John 17:12). The church is therefore under the protection of God himself. They need protection because the world is hostile to them (John 15: 18–22).

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for His love and mercy.

Thank Him for His protection.

Thank Him for securing your Salvation through His Son.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.*

*John 17:8b*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 17:6-12

## Discussion questions

Read John 17:6-7. What people are described in verse 6, and what did Jesus do for them? What did these people come to know? What does it teach you?

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Read John 17:8. What did Jesus do with the message of the Father, and what was the disciple's reaction to this? How will you make it practically in your life?

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Read John 17:9. What significant distinction does Jesus make? Who does He pray for? Does this mean believers do not need to pray for the world?

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Discuss the importance of being sure of your Salvation. Does it have an impact on your life? How?

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**Close in prayer**

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**Week 8**

# Protect us from the Evil One!

**Memory Verse:**

*My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.*

*John 17:15*



# PERSONAL STUDY

**Read John 17:13-19**

## **OPENING REMARKS:**

When Jesus returns to the Father, He is happy. He comes home to the Father. He is also happy because He has completed His redemptive work perfectly. He leaves behind living "monuments" of the Father's redemptive act.

Is it not striking that Jesus does not pray that the Father should withdraw the disciples from the world, but rather asks that they be kept from evil stumbling blocks?

As Christians, we must realize that the task to witness is important, and the risks involved are great. The hatred of the world will increase the more the world sees that you belong to God.

When you live in the victory that Jesus achieved, the world's jealousy will turn into hatred and anger. Therefore, we need the protection of the Father.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

**Read John 17:14 and 16**

What is the second aspect of Jesus' mission that He reveals here?

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What assurance does Jesus give in verse 16?

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The believers are in their nature and origin not of this world. They belong to Jesus and act like Jesus (verse 16). Therefore, the world sees them as opponents and enemies (verse 14). However, this does not mean that they must run away from the world. Believers remain in this world as people who belong to God and serve Him right here.

**Read John 17:15 and 17a**

What is Jesus' request/petition for His followers who live in this world?

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**Read John 17:14a and 17**

What has God given to protect His people?

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Believers live in this world as people who belong to God and not to the world. But because they serve Him right here where they are hated, they need protection. Jesus has given them the Word - now He pleads his Father to keep them dedicated to Him through His Word. The Greek word here implies that God set apart the believers as the priests are set apart for God in the temple. The priests remained in the world, but their hearts and interests lay with God. They wanted to serve Him alone. However, the Christians do not stay in the temple, but in the Word of God. In other words, the will of God must control and envelop their whole life. It should be the guideline for the believer's life program and actions. Such people can mean something to Jesus in this world. That is why Jesus sends them into the world to continue his work.

**Read John 17:18**

What is our mission?

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As Jesus revealed the Father in this world, so the believers must continue to reveal Jesus to this world. As the people get to know Jesus, so they will get to know the Father. As people set apart for the Lord, as people who live for the truth, the believer must go and do the work of God in this world.

It therefore means that God's revelation to this world continue to roll out by the believers and their actions through the dark and sinful world. The actions of the believers must be the mirror in which the world sees God.

### **Read John 17:13**

What is Jesus' gift for His followers who live in a hostile world where they do not belong?

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Jesus' Word gives us joy (John 17:13); and this inward joy gives us the strength to overcome (refer to Nehemiah 8:10). The believer does not find his joy in the world but in the Word. Like John the Baptist, we should rejoice greatly when we hear the bridegroom's voice (John 3:29)!

## **CLOSING REMARKS:**

The Word of God does not only bring us God's joy and love, but it also imparts God's power for holy living (John 17:15–17). The burden of our Lord's prayer in John 17:6–12 was security, but here it is sanctity, practical holy living to the glory of God. We are in the world but not of the world, and we must not live like the world. Sometimes we think it would be easier if we were "out of the world," but this is not true. Wherever we go, we take our own sinful self with us, and the powers of darkness will follow us.

The Word gives us joy, love, and power to live a holy life. It also gives us what we need to serve Him as witnesses in this world (John 17:18–19). Sanctification is not for the purpose of selfish enjoyment or boasting; it is so that we might represent Christ in this world and win others to Him. Jesus set Himself apart for us, and now He has set us apart for Him. The Father sent Him into the world, and now He sends us into the world. We are people "under orders" and we had better obey! Jesus is now "set apart" in heaven, praying for us, that our witness will bear fruit as many repent of their sins and turn to the Lord.

How can we be overcome by the world when we have the Word of God to enlighten us, enable us, and encourage us?

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for His protection.

Ask Him to help you to not be afraid to fulfil your purpose here on earth.

Thank Him for His Word that enlighten, enable and encourage us.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.*

*John 17:15*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 17:13-19

## Discussion questions

Read John 17:14. What was the second part of Jesus' mission that He revealed here?

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Read John 17:15-17. What is Jesus' request/petition for His followers who live in this world? How can you make that a reality in your life?

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What has God given His people for their protection? In what way does the Bible help you in your everyday life? Discuss.

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Read John 17:18. What is our mission on earth? Do you find it easy to fulfill your mission? Discuss.

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**Close in prayer**

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**Week 9**

# **Glorifying God by being One!**

**Memory Verse:**

*I have given them the glory that you gave me,  
that they may be one as we are one.*

*John 17:22*



# PERSONAL STUDY

Read John 17:20-26

## OPENING REMARKS:

Success awaits the disciples' mission to the world. That is why Jesus is already praying for those who will come to faith as part of the mission based on the disciples' preaching. He prays that they may be one, just as the Father and the Son are one. To be one means to experience the mutual indwelling of the Father, Son and Spirit: to become "blood relatives" of God through the "blood sacrifice" of his Son.

Unity in Christ means that all believers are in a relationship with Christ and, by extension, to every other believer. All believers are united with each other whether they know it or not, like it or not, or feel like it or not.

The orientation point of this unity lies in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is not only an invisible, spiritual unity, but must also be visible in our lives. The challenge of Christian unity is to live up to the truth of that reality.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### **Read John 17:20**

Who is Jesus praying for in verse 20?

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### **Read John 17: 21**

When Jesus prays that the disciples will be one, what is He praying for?

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### **Read John 17:22**

Who gave Jesus His glory?

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It is important to remember that the glory that God the Father gave to God the Son was glory that often appeared humble, weak, and suffering. It was glory that was ultimately displayed in radical sacrifice. The glory of Jesus

is almost the opposite of the self-glory and glory (vanity) of man.

What blessing did Jesus give the disciples?

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When Jesus tells the disciples to be one, what is He speaking of?

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Jesus did not pray for uniformity, or church unity among believers, but for a personal dynamic of unity, bringing together the Church's rich diversity. Unity of churches does not insure unity of the Spirit.

The foundation of our unity is the same as the foundation of unity between the Father and the Son: a deep relationship between equal persons. We are all on the same ground at the cross. That is what Jesus envisions: a great multitude before the throne of God, of every race, tongue, class and social status; and therefore, He prays that they may overcome their different backgrounds and understand their unity.

## **Read John 17:23-24**

In what is our unity founded?

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There is a unity of compromise, or of fear or coercion. Jesus wanted a unity of love, and common identity in Jesus. Jesus prays for a unity founded in love, because the Father loves the believers as extravagantly as He loves his Son.

How can the world benefit from unity among Christians?

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The idea that the unity of God's people would display to the world that Jesus was truly sent from God the Father was so important to Jesus that He repeats it in this prayer (see verses 11 and 23). Jesus prayed that the unity among generations of believers to come would also demonstrate to the world that Jesus loves His people, after the pattern of God the Father's love for God the Son.

This reminds us of the importance of unity and love among Christians. It is as if Jesus gave the world permission to

doubt both His mission and His love if the world does not see unity and love among believers.

**Read John 17:26**

What great secret of Christian living do we find in this verse?

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Jesus received love from God the Father, and this love relationship was the strength and sustenance of His life. Here, concluding His great prayer, Jesus prayed that the same love that was His strength and sustenance would fill His disciples (both near and far).

This speaks to the essential place of love in the Christian life and community. Jesus thought it so important that He specifically prayed for love when He might have prayed for many other things.

The secret of Christian living is Jesus and His love indwelling the believer. God's love transforms believers so that they love one another as God loves them.

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

The unity between believers must be so visible in the actions that flows from our love, that it challenges the world to believe in Jesus Christ as well.

Jan A du Randt says in his book: "*Liefdesnote in die Wingerdlote*" that Jesus prays for unity among the believers for three reasons:

- a) So that the world may believe that the Father has sent the Son;
- b) so that the followers may be one, just as the Father and Son are one; and
- c) so that the world may know that the Father has sent the Son.

We therefore see that the mission of the Son and its acceptance by faith, is the heartbeat of John's message.

Jesus concludes His moving prayer with the prayer for the fulfillment of true love. It is that the Father's love, which He has shown to His Son, must become visible in the believers. Our love as believers is not the expression of our good intentions, but the answer planted in us by God. Then God becomes truly visible through our acts of love.

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for His love and mercy.

Thank Him for transforming your life through His love.

Ask Him to help you to love your fellow believers and to be one with them.

Pray for unity in your church.

Ask Father to become visible to the world through your acts of love.

# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Prayer

### Memory verse:

*I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.*

*John 17:22*

### Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

### Scripture Reading:

John 17:20-26

## Discussion questions

Read John 17:20. Who is Jesus praying for? What does it mean to you?

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Read John 17:22. Who gave Jesus His glory? What does it mean to you?

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Read John 17:21-24. Why do you think unity is so important to Jesus? In what is our unity founded?

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Read John 17:26. What great secret of Christian living do we find in this verse?

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**Close in prayer**



# MEMORY VERSES

## WEEK 1:

When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

John 15:26-27

## WEEK 2:

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 16:13

## WEEK 3:

...Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

John 16:22

## WEEK 4:

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace.

John 16:33a

**WEEK 5:**

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 17:3

**WEEK 6:**

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: Father...

John 17:1a

**WEEK 7:**

They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

John 17:8b

**WEEK 8:**

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

John 17:15

**WEEK 9:**

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one.

John 17:22

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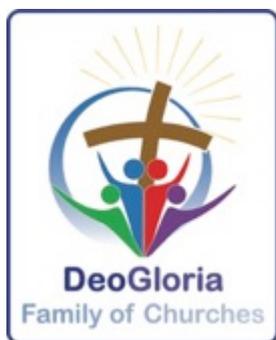
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**2021**

108