



## Repentance Tabernacle Church

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### It Takes All of Us

**Focus Verses:** John 17:20-21 - <sup>20</sup>Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; <sup>21</sup>That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

**Lesson Text:** John 17

**Truth About God:** God invites us to pray and work for unity.

**Truth For My Life:** I will pray for and work toward unity.

John 17 is sandwiched between Jesus' wonderful, beautiful promise of a place prepared for us and His harrowing arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus knew He would soon be betrayed by a dear friend, face a mockery of a trial, be convicted on false charges, be scourged to the point of death, and be crucified as the sinless sacrifice for sins. Before He faced these challenges, He did what He knew to do. The Man Christ Jesus prayed.

Jesus' prayer list reveals so much to us about what mattered. Jesus did not pray for comfort; He prayed for the will of God. He prayed first for Himself and His followers. He prayed that He might glorify God with His life and ultimately His death. For the Scriptures declare He was "*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*" (Revelation 13:8). He also prayed His disciples would be kept from the evil one and that they would be sanctified by truth. **The Word is Truth!** The Word of God stands sure. "*For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven*" (Psalm 119:89). Luke 21:33 says, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*" Pray for God to sanctify you and make you holy as you cling to His forever-settled Word like an anchor in turbulent waves. Pray for your children and grandchildren and nieces and nephews who are being taught all manner of messages contradictory to the Word and nature of God.

Jesus prayed for unity and that we all would be one. He thought back to the story of the Tower of Babel and the power of unity. Perhaps He thought back to the day He handpicked each of His twelve followers to follow Him. Their love for one another was one telltale sign the world would know that are Jesus' disciples (John 13:35).

Maybe He looked ahead to that glorious Day of Pentecost when His people would join together in one accord in one place, and the Holy Ghost would fall on them. Jesus knows the power of unity, and when His people are united, no one and nothing can stop them. He prayed, "*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*" (John 17:21). Jesus considered unity to be a sign to the unbelieving world that Jesus really is the God-sent Messiah, the Christ.

Although we are not with Him in the same sense the disciples were, we are still with Him nevertheless. We walk with Him, we talk with Him, we fellowship with Him, and now that we live on this side of the Day of Pentecost, He lives within us. We certainly understand that there is no greater feeling or infilling than to have Christ in us, the hope of glory.

In a world sharply divided by politics, religion, education, income, and even geography, unity is still a God-glorifying testimony of the power of the gospel. When we as men, women, teens, and children worship and pray together regardless of political views or income levels, we are silently signaling to the world that Jesus and His gospel have the supernatural power to bring people together whom society tries to tear apart.

We have at least one commonality that exceeds all our differences: we are saved by grace through faith. And that one commonality is enough to cause us all to join together for the holy cause of unity. Could it be that our grace-directed efforts could be answering a prayer Jesus prayed nearly two thousand years earlier: "***that they all may be one.***"

It is God's will for us to care for one another, love one another, and talk to one another. God knows if we will stop talking to each other, we will never reach the heights God intended us to reach. But when we start talking to each other, working with each other, and coming together despite our differences, we can do anything God has called us to do because all of us can do far more than any one of us.