

The Glory of the Church

Gospel of John, Part LX

John 17:20-26

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I. The Ascended Christ (cf. Eph 4:7ff)

- 1-5 *The Son prays for Himself and the Father*
- 6-19 *The Son prays for the Twelve Disciples*
- 20-26 *The Son prays for the Church and the World*

II. Praying for the Church

A. Identity of the Church (20 cf. 2 Tim 2:2)

Those for whom Christ prays are *those who hold to the _____ faith.*

B. Unify Them (cf. 17:11)

- 21a - *That they all may be one, _____ You, Father, are in Me, and I in You*
 - 21b - *That they also may be _____ in Us*
 - 21c - *That the _____ may believe that You sent Me.*
- 22b-23a - *That they may be one just _____ We are one; I in them, and You in Me;*
 - 23b - *That they may be made perfect in _____,*
 - 23c - *That the _____ may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.*

1. Basis for Unity (21a, 22b-23a)

The *basis* for our unity is the unity of the Father and Son. Jesus prays that we would reflect their unity and the eternal _____ *that God had for His Son* (24b).

2. Source of Unity (21b, 23b)

The *source* of our unity is the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We have no spiritual unity with those who deny the Trinity, we share a _____ union with all those who confess the Triune Name.

3. Goal of Unity (21c, 23c)

The *goal* of our unity is the conversion of the nations: that the _____ *believe* in Jesus as God's Messiah and *know* that Christians are God's chosen people.

C. Glorify Them (cf. Jn 3:36)

Jesus prays that we would always be with Him and asks the *Righteous Father* to distinguish between the Church and the world.

- I. Prologue: The Identity of the Son of God (1:1-18)
- II. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Public Ministry (1:19-12:50)
 - A. The Son of God Revealed (1:19-4:54)
 - B. The Son of God Rejected (5:1-12:36)
 - C. Conclusion (12:37-50)
- III. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Passion and Resurrection (13:1-20:31)
 - A. Introduction: He knew His hour had come (13:1)
 - B. Jesus Prepares the Disciples for His Departure (13:2-17:26)
 - C. Jesus Departs this world to the Father (18:1-20:29)
 - D. Conclusion: Purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31)
- IV. Epilogue: The Future Mission of the Son of God (21)

III. The Glory of the Church

A. Perichoresis (cf. Gen 1:26-28; 2:18; Jn 7:18; 8:28; 12:27-28; 16:13ff; 17:5, 24)

Jesus prays, “*And the _____ which You gave Me I have given them...*” (22a). Jesus imparts His glory to His Church. In the creation account, Adam’s aloneness was “*not good.*” God created man *in His image* and *God is not alone*. Therefore, man alone did not meet the design specs. In the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in an eternal fellowship of love and harmony; they live in community and companionship with one another: *You, Father, in Me, and I in You* (21a). The Father and Son have dwelt forever in perfect harmony and peace, in a relationship of perfect love, in joyful communion and communication with one another, a union so perfect that the Union is Himself the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

All sorts of people are fond of repeating the Christian statement that ‘God is love’. But they seem not to notice that the words ‘God is love’ have no real meaning unless God contains at least two Persons. Love is something that one person has for another person. If God was a single person, then before the world was made, He was not love... [Christians] believe that the living, dynamic activity of love has been going on in God forever and has created everything else. And that, by the way, is perhaps the most important difference between Christianity and all other religions: that in Christianity God is not a static thing – not even a person – but a dynamic, pulsating activity, a life, almost a kind of drama. Almost, if you will not think me irreverent, a kind of dance. The union between the Father and the Son is such a live concrete thing that this union itself is also a Person... What grows out of the joint life of the Father and Son is a real Person, is in fact the Third of the three Persons who are God, [the Holy Spirit]. (Lewis, Mere Christianity, 174-75)

Companionship and friendship, in other words, are part of the image of God. God designed us to live in fellowship with one another. This is part of our glory.

B. The Glory of the Lord is Risen upon You (Isaiah 60)

Christ imparts His glory to His people. The unity and diversity that exist in harmony in God, He bestows on His people that we might reflect His glory in the world, that the world might come to know and believe in the Lord.

Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. (Is 60:1-3)

C. One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church (Eph 4:5)

- *One –*
- *Holy –*
- *Catholic –*
- *Apostolic Church –*

IV. Conclusion