

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 40 (October 1-7, 2017)

In His longest recorded prayer (known as The High Priestly Prayer), Jesus prays that glory will come to Him because of the unity of His followers. Never in my lifetime has the nation/world been so divided. Because of this, I will spend the next few weeks on Scriptures that should motivate us to live in unity. We don't have to see eye to eye to walk arm in arm!

Sunday, October 1 (read John 17:1-5)

“And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”
(John 17:5)

Many Christians do not understand that Jesus has always existed with the Father; therefore, they don't understand that He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (v. 5; see also Colossians 1:15-19; Hebrews 1:1-3). In His role as the Second Person of the Trinity, Jesus came to earth for the purpose of giving His life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. That's why He was glorified by His death (v. 1). Now that He has finished the work on earth that the Father has assigned to Him (v. 2-4), He desires **unity** among those who have received His gift of salvation. As we look at the rest of His powerful prayer in the coming devotions, unity will be our main topic.

Monday, October 2 (read John 17:6-12)

“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 17:11)

Jesus begins today's text by identifying His disciples as those who **obey His Word** (v. 6). Because of this, they understand that the Father has sent His Word through the Son, the Living Word (v. 7-8; see also John 1:1-2, 14). The Lord tells us from the beginning that the politically correct world will never become united with the Word of God (v. 9); therefore, He prays for unity only among all of His **disciples** (v. 10-11). Jesus spiritually protected His disciples while He walked with them except, of course, the one who betrayed Him (Judas), thus fulfilling Old Testament prophecy (v. 12; see also Psalm 41:9). This kept them united, even though they differed in many ways. We will look at the rest of His prayer for His disciples in tomorrow's devotion.

Tuesday, October 3 (read John 17:13-19)

“Sanctify them by the truth; Your Word is truth.” (John 17:17)

The only way that Christian leaders can be united is through complete trust and confidence in His Word (v. 17; also v. 6). We may not all interpret it exactly alike, but we should all believe that the Word of God is infallible. As God says through the pen of the Apostle Paul, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The same Word that brings **joy** to us will produce **hatred** from the politically correct world (v. 13-14). Jesus now sits on the right hand of the Father and intercedes for us as that hatred from the world gets more intense (v. 15-16; see also Hebrews 7:25). The Lord has sent us into a hostile world to preach and to model the Word of God. He set apart (sanctified) His life so that we may follow in His footsteps (v. 17-19; see also Hebrews 4:15).

Wednesday, October 4 (read John 17:20-23)

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 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” (John 17:20-21).

Jesus now prays for all believers, a prayer that now includes all of us who have come to salvation since the day of Pentecost when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and the Church was born (v. 20-21; see also Acts 2:1-12). His focus on unity, however, remains the same. He knows that a divided church will never influence the world in which we live (v. 21). How can we who have various backgrounds and opinions become one? He answers that by teaching that just as the Father lives in Him, He also will live in us through the Holy Spirit (v. 22-23a). When we truly live a Spirit-filled life, the world will realize that Jesus loves **them** and has given His life that they may be saved from this corrupt generation (v. 23; see also Acts 2:40). Love will fulfill His prayer! Anger and judgment will not!

Thursday, October 5 (read John 17:24-26)

“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” (John 17:24)

For a Christian, death is His reward, not His punishment! That’s why today’s printed verse has become one of my favorite verses to use at the funeral of a Christian. The current worldview questions **God** when the car of a drunk driver runs into the car of a Christian family, often bringing death to the family while the drunk doesn’t receive a scratch. If Heaven is not our real home, then that is unfair! From God’s viewpoint, however, the Christian family enters into Heaven while the drunk lives on with a chance to repent and to join them in Heaven later on. That’s mercy and grace at work! Our citizenship is in Heaven (Philippians 3:20-21), so we are merely going home. Since we are still living in the Day of Grace, God continues to work through us to win the lost world to Him (v. 25-26).

Friday, October 6 (read Ephesians 4:1-6)

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)

Many TV preachers get rich by proclaiming a “name it and claim it” doctrine (or as I call it, “blab it and grab it”). Anything that **God** has promised, you can name it and claim it, but air-conditioned doghouses, condominiums, and health and wealth are not among them. Jesus is the Word of God, so when He prays to the Father, His requests are always granted. We have learned that His High Priestly Prayer focused on **unity** for His disciples and their converts (John 17); therefore, He **established** unity when He prayed. That’s why we are commanded to “**keep** the unity of the Spirit,” not establish it. The rest of today’s reading commands you to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received,” carefully giving instructions as to how you can do that. Do not cause division by trying to prove your rightness on every point (v. 2)! When you do, you divide the body of Christ (v. 4-6)!

Saturday, October 7 (read Ephesians 4:17-19)

Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. (Ephesians 4:19)

The printed verse perfectly describes the world in which we live. The politically correct world constantly demands approval of any perverted lifestyle imaginable. Just as the Bible says, there is always a **continual lust** for more and more deviant activities. These people reject all authority; therefore, they reject Jesus and the Word of God. Instead, they march and protest for the right to live according to the desires of the flesh instead of the teachings of the Bible. They have hardened their hearts to the Biblically correct worldview. Many colleges refuse to allow anyone with a Biblical worldview to speak on their campuses. Amazingly, they label such speakers as haters! The world is upside down (Isaiah 5:20). We will continue with this theme in next week’s devotions.