

GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES FOR JANUARY 24, 2021
For Community Groups or Personal Study

Jesus had us, you and me, and Grace church Yakima too, on His mind when He prayed for His friends and followers the night before He died. He was about to depart this world. He knew the challenges ahead, the pain ahead, the darkness on the horizon. He promised us protection, help, and power; power to unify, to love, to change us, and the world. As we move further into our study of the 2021 Church we are seeking to understand who we are as God's people, and how that impacts our life. God's call for unity among Christians pushes against the divisiveness in the world around us. Unity among Christians, including those of us here at Grace of Christ, is not optional, it is expected. Even when Christians gather in different locations, if we are genuine in our desire to love Him, follow Him, honor Him, we will passionately pursue unity. Christian unity is not about personal preferences, it is built on the understanding that what connects us, unifies us, defines us, is stronger, bigger, more important, than anything attempting to pull us apart. Unity for us is all about Jesus.

At Grace we are called to love and respect others. So much so that we willingly give up what we prefer in order to love those around us. At the center of EVERYTHING is this world's One savior, and ours, Jesus.

2021.CHURCH

SERMON PASSAGE: JOHN 17:20-26

"²⁰ I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Chapters 12-18 in John's gospel (gospel = good news) cover a one-week period of time beginning with Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem

(Palm Sunday) and ending with His betrayal by a friend and arrest by leaders of the church. The first communion (Lord's Supper) is found in chapter 13, parables and teachings fill most of the rest. Chapter 17 is a prayer. It is the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. He offered this prayer for his friends and followers, and for "all who would believe in Him because of their word". We believe because of their word.

1. What role did the original 11 disciples play in our Christian faith? Was Jesus praying for us too? (v. 20)
2. Based on this section of Jesus' prayer how would describe His relationship with His Father?
3. How many times in this passage does the theme of unity occur? What kind of unity was, is, Jesus praying for?
4. How do we know the Father? (vv. 25-26)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

5. What did Jesus mean when He spoke of "the glory" given to Him by the Father? How do we share in His glory? (vv. 22-24)
6. How does our unity, or disunity, as Christians affect those who are still undecided about, or even far from, God? (vv. 21-23)

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

7. Does God know you? Does God think about you? Does God really care about you individually? What does the Bible have to say about God's direct and personal relationship with you? (Consider: Luke 12:6-7, Psalm 139, Romans 16 list of names, John 3 Jesus cares for a Samaritan woman ...)
8. What steps are you taking in your life to build relationships with those who disagree with you on politics, worship styles, hot button issues, with those who live in a different part of town, have a different background, attend a different church?

Notes: _____

Spend time in silence, praying (even if just for a minute or two). Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Be honest. If you don't know how or what to pray admit that and ask God to help you pray. In your prayer ask God to help you meet, and build real friendships with, those in our church, your neighborhood, our city who believe differently, or come from a different background. Ask Him to help you understand the importance of unity. Pray that our unity and love would draw others to Jesus. God will help us!