

LIGHTHOUSE GROUP CURRICULUM

John 17:20-26

LEADER'S STUDY

One in Christ

John 17:20-26

What is happening?

Jesus is speaking to His disciples just before His arrest, preparing them for the mission He has for them once He's gone. Throughout John's gospel account, he records Jesus declaring that He and the Father were one (10:30), and that everything He said and did was only what the Father was doing (5:19). Here, Jesus says that all who follow Him in faith (v. 20) will be one with Him as He is with the Father. This is an astonishing concept, that believers become *one with* Christ and are united together as *one in* Christ in order to carry out the work He began—that is, reconciling all the world to the Father. Jesus prayer for us is that we would have the same unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit that He has and have unity with one another as His family.

Where is the gospel?

The gospel is everywhere in this passage! Christ sanctifies the Church and equips us for His work (vv. 17-19 and Eph. 5:25-27). When we trust Him by faith and submit ourselves to Him, He makes us holy and right before God so that we can be one with Him. Through that we can experience real unity with one another. Through the gospel Jesus gives us supernatural resource for relationships with Him and with each other. Relationships like this are not something we can do on our own, they are founded in and fueled by God's grace. Our relationships are a testimony of this to the world, so that others can see God's love for them through our love for one another. All of this reveals God's glory, His perfect holiness, as our relationships with Him and with others are not like anything else in the world.

As you prepare for this week, ask yourself questions like these: When we come to faith in Christ, do we retain our autonomy, or do we become a new entity, being one with Him (2 Cor. 5:17)? What was the purpose for this unity that Jesus prayed for in verses 21 and 23? How does submission to Jesus affect all of my relationships? How does being one with Christ change my view of others? How is God calling you to think and to live differently? How does this change your perspective today? How is God calling you to respond based on this scripture?

Spend some time reading and meditating on this passage as you prepare for your meeting. Be willing to share this with your group and invite them to join you in sharing how God is asking them to respond to His word. Be willing to share areas that He is calling you to "follow Him" and make clear "I" statements about how you are going to align with Him.

Some helpful scriptures: Isaiah 54:1-8; 1 Corinthians 6:11-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:21-32. What other places in scripture speak this same truth?

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INTENTIONAL BIBLE READING

READ John 17:20-26
and meditate on it.

Read in the ESV or similar word-for-word translation.

Read it again in the NLT to get a thought-for-thought perspective. (The New Living Translation is particularly helpful with this passage)

Try to summarize the passage in your own words.

Every verse of scripture points to the gospel. Look for how this passage points to Jesus and what He has done.

POTENTIAL STUDY QUESTIONS

These are just questions you might ask to help your group discussion. Don't feel like you need to answer all of these as a group

What is significant, surprising or confusing from these verses?

What seems to be the main point of this letter?

How does this portion of scripture point to Jesus and the gospel?

What parts of this passage are challenging to your current way of thinking?

What did you discover or learn about God and His character from this passage?

What parts of this passage can you relate to?

Look at one or two key words and define them really clearly, then look at them in context with that definition. Does this change your understanding?

Why did God bring me to this scripture today?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

How is God calling you to obey, based on this passage?

or

What is your "I will" statement?

(Encourage everyone to steer clear of "we" or "us" or "Christians" statements)

With whom are you going to share what you have learned?

(This is a critical part of growth that is often overlooked. If we can share it with someone else it means we really understand it, it cements it in our own minds, it makes us accountable to the truth and it blesses the one who hears it. Rom 10:17)

Based on this passage, what can we pray about and how should we pray?