

## **What Jesus Prays for All Believers**

### **John 17:20-23**

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. NKJV

At first sight it looks as though Jesus prayer has never come close to be answered. That is because of how we are reading the passage.

Some think that Jesus is praying here that all the denominations would get together in one big church. Well we had that once. They called it the dark ages. It was a time when the corruption in the Church was unbelievable.

Even some Protestants forget that there was a reformation, because it was very much needed. Just go back and study Luther's complaints against the church to see.

Also there was unity because the national church persecuted local churches that did not follow the party policy. People were punished for thinking for themselves, or for even reading the Bible for themselves. During this stage of history, the Bible was a banned book, by the church. The rivers of the country side ran red with the blood of martyrs who dared not be in unity with the Church.

The reason things got the way they did was because you became a member of the Church as a infant. And there was more that a 50/50 chance that you would not become a Christian, yet you were in the church and if you were successful you probably would become a leader in the church. This is the danger of infant baptism. This is the danger of church membership without being regenerated by the Spirit of God.

Eventually, simply as a matter of statistics, that is that there are more lost people in a community than there are saved people, the Church was soon controlled by men who had never known the grace of God. And that led to the dark ages and to the reformation.

That is the problem in a church when through a lax policy of accepting members because we are "dying" for members, that we allow and encourage unbelievers to become members that eventually the church no longer has a majority of Spirit lead people to lead.

I remember back when I was just visiting here, and a visiting minister was teaching an adult SS class. Right over here on my left. And he began to teach that the miracles of Moses were not really miracles but could be explained. Now he did not say that plainly but that is what he meant. I did not say a thing. I wanted to see what you folks were made of. And it didn't take Grace Cinnamon very long to pipe right up and say something like, "you don't mean that these were not miracles, do you?" and the fella back right up. You see he was selling, hoping to get a job here.

I want to tell you something. Something I have never told you although I have told plenty of other people. When I was asked to preach here back in August of 1994, I was not selling. I preached two messages expecting them to be the last two messages I would ever get the opportunity to

preach here.

I am not for the ecumenical movement. It is lead by the liberals of our day from every denomination. I do not see Bible believers in it from, really any denomination.

If you think that Jesus is here talking about an organized Church then you need to reread the passage.

But I do cooperate with other Christians from other denominations. I had the opportunity to preach at the community Ash Wednesday service this week. I think we have a special blessing in our community, I think that every pastor in our community is a born again Christian. And I cannot help but have a unity with them. Because I know that they have Christ in them and they are in Christ and Christ is in the Father. That unity cannot be torn down by outward organizations.

I. Who does Jesus pray for?

A. Essentially all future believers.

1. I think this is special, since here Jesus is praying for me and for you as well if you are one of His.
2. The things He prayed for the others He also prayed for us.
  - a. Joy
  - b. Holiness
  - c. Keep us from the evil one
  - d. Sanctification through the truth.
  - e. What a reassurance to know that in the Garden of Gethsemane that evening He prayed for us.

II. He prays that they may be one.

A. And we are one, if we are His.

1. We have the same Spirit.
2. We have the same Word.
3. We are united to Jesus.
4. Jesus lives in us.
5. We have the same purpose.
6. We have the same destination.

B. I think the greatest way we are one is in our love for one another.

1. Every Christian ought to have a commonality with all other true believers.
2. Now some have a special relationship because of the sports team they cheer.

3. Others have a unity because of a organization they belong to.
4. Some have a unity because of where they work, etc.
5. But nothing can compare to the unity that we have in Christ.
6. Nothing that divides is greater than that unity we have in Christ that joins us.

III. The result would be that the world might believe that Jesus was sent by God.

A. We sell ourselves short.

1. Maybe we ought to have a Christian history month.
2. We have rolled over and are playing dead.
3. What a different nation we would have without Christians.
  - a. Compare the American Revolution, with the French Revolution.

IV. That the world might know that God loves us.

A. This is the big one.

B. God does love us.

C. When we have the love of Christ, people will seek us out to find out why we are so different.

D. Are you different.