

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XXXVIII: Trusting In Christ For His Gracious Edification Of True Believers, John 14-17

J. Trusting In Christ For His High Priestly Intercession For His Believers, John 17

3. Trusting In Christ For His Prayer For All Who Trust In Him Through The Apostles' Word (John 17:20-26)

I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel claims that Jesus' disciples had received of His fullness "grace for grace" (KJV), the "constant reception of one evidence of God's grace replacing another," John 1:16; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 273.
- B. This truth is clarified in Christ's John 17:20-26 High Priestly Prayer where He prayed for all those who would trust in Him through His apostles' word, and we view it for our insight and edification (as follows):

II. Trusting In Christ For His Prayer For All Who Trust In Him Through The Apostles' Word.

- A. The Church is built on the foundation of the apostles, with Christ as the Chief Corner Stone, Eph. 2:19-20.
- B. Jesus thus prayed in the hearing of His disciples the John 17:20-26 words He knew John would share with us of that prayer for all of us who would trust in Christ through His apostles' words, and thus of His care for us:
 1. John 17:20 clarified that Christ's prayer moved beyond petitioning for the care of His apostles to the care of all who would trust in Him by their word. This verse offers the basis for New Testament canonicity, and the Early Church heeded it to treat as canonical only those writings that had apostolic authority.
 2. Jesus requested that all believers in Him would be unified as manifested in how they lived and ministered, a unity similar to the unity of the Father and the Son, John 17:21; *Ibid.*, p. 333; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to John 17:21. This unity would testify to the lost that they might believe the Father had sent Christ, leading many in the world to trust in Christ for salvation, John 17:22-23.
 3. Though John 17:20-23 is often used to promote the ecumenical movement of uniting all religious groups as one (*Ibid.*, B. K. C., N. T., p. 333), Jesus meant a discriminating unity of true believers in Biblical truth:
 - a. Christ's intercession for us believers who trust in Christ through the apostle's words (John 17:20) asks the Father to unite us as one, including our unification with the Apostles and Christ, and according to Christ's testimony in John 17:17, 19, that unity occurs in the sanctifying truth of God's Word.
 - b. John 17:16 reveals that such sanctification makes both the apostles and all who put their faith in Christ for salvation through the apostles' word as being as separate from the world as Christ is separate from it.
 - c. Thus, the unity of which Christ spoke in petitioning the Father was a **discriminating** unity, one that was based on the *truth* in *Christ* and *God's Word* as **opposed** to the *doctrinal corruption of ecumenism!*
 4. Jesus also asked that the true universal Church might one day be with Him to behold the glory the Father had **permanently** given (*dedokas*, U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 398; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 85; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 191-193) Him, John 17:24a,b. Jesus had this glory in eternity past (John 17:5) and would again express it in heaven, *Ibid.*, B. K. C., N. T., p. 334.
 5. We know from passages like Hebrews 2:10, 2 Thessalonians 2:14 and 1 John 3:2 that this "beholding" of Jesus' glory will be accompanied by our own entering into His glory so that "we shall be like Him"!
 6. In ending His intercessory prayer, Christ addressed God the Father as "**Righteous** Father," asserting that **God** in His righteousness was **unknown** by the **sinful world**, but that the **apostles** and all **disciples through their word** would **know** the **Righteous** Father, and **know** that He had sent Jesus as the **Righteous** Son of God, John 17:25. Thus, Jesus affirmed anew that He had declared the **Righteous** Father's Name, His Person and character unto His disciples, and would continue to do so, that the love by which the **Righteous** Father had loved Christ would be in them, and the **Righteous** Son in them in *sharp contrast* to the **lack** of any such righteous love in the **world**. This closing of Jesus' prayer abundantly promotes the *discriminatory nature* of the **unity believers in Christ possess in contrast to the errant, evil world.**

Lesson: *Christ prayed for those who would trust in Him through His apostles' word, setting the stage for New Testament canonicity and for our spiritual unity with the apostles and Christ as a testimony to the world. This unity would be distinct from an errant ecumenical, sinful unity and godless world since it would be based on God's sanctifying truth in His Word, a unity finding final expression in seeing and participating with Christ in His glory.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Jesus Christ to be saved, John 20:31. (2) May we heed Scripture to live apart from sin and apart from a sinful world in righteous, loving unity with Christ and one another in the Lord.*