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Sent: Thursday, October 27, 2016 1:00 AM
To: fred@orcutfamily.net
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ONE NATION UNDER GOD Devotional

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The Unity Jesus Prayer For

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. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one — I in them and you in me — so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

Reflection

One of the key terms Jesus used for describing the fellowship of the church was unity. In fact, it was so

Challenge

For the sake of His name, Jesus calls

important that He prayed for it three times during His High Priestly prayer found in John 17:20-23. After He had prayed for the disciples who were with Him at that time, He extended His prayer to include *“those who will believe in Me through their message”* (John 17:20). Jesus is referring to everyone who would become His followers as a result of the preaching and writing that would be done by the disciples in whom He had invested His own ministry. Therefore, that includes all who claim to be true disciples and followers of Christ today. His message has been handed down from generation to generation since the time Jesus prayed, as recorded in John 17. Therefore, this prayer of Jesus is also for us today! The question is, “Are we going to cooperate with Him in fulfilling it?”

It seems that if Jesus prayed for something three times within four verses, it must be pretty much a priority with Him! Here is His prayer: *“My prayer is not for them alone (disciples with Him at the time). 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. I have given them the glory that You gave Me, that they may be one as We are one: I in them and You in Me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me”* (John 17:20-23).

You will notice the number of times Jesus said various things in

us to live in unity in order to make more disciples. No one will be interested in what we have to say as long as we live fragmented and broken lives of disunity!

For Discussion

How is the world going to know that the Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ when we are so divided?

What difference does it make when the church is so fragmented and living in disharmony?

this passage that tell us much about who we are to be as members of His Body, the Church, and what our priorities are to be.

1. Three times He asks the Father to make His people one — to be united for His cause and purpose. Numerous times throughout the New Testament divisiveness and disharmony are exposed and condemned as undermining the work of the Kingdom and the Church. In fact such attitudes are listed with some of the sins most would classify as the really “bad” ones!
2. Twice Jesus gives a reason for being in unity, stating the result will be “*so that the world may believe that you have sent Me*” and “*to let the world know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me*” (vv. 21b, 23). A very real hindrance to evangelism is the lack of unity within the Church community. We will never successfully reach non-believers as long as we are so divided and fighting among ourselves!
3. In this passage, as well as so many others, Jesus speaks much about love — the love the Father has for us, the love He has commanded us to show toward one another and the love we are to show to those outside the church, so that they may also come to know Him as a result. John who recorded this great prayer of Jesus also pointed out in his first letter that “*anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, who he has not seen. And He has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.*” (1 John 4:20-21)

Therefore, for the sake of His name, He calls us to live in unity in order to reach and make more disciples, showing His kind of love to everyone — both inside and outside the church family. What kind of witness are we giving when we refuse and allow personal preferences and selfish ambition to determine how we will live? No one is going to be interested in what we have to say as long as we live fragmented and broken lives ourselves!



Glenn Ward - Having been in the ministry for almost 52 years, the Lord has blessed me to serve as pastor for the majority of those years and now have the joy and privilege of serving as Director of Missions for Paluxy Baptist Association. My wife, Carolyn and I were married 50 years ago in July, of this year (2016). We have three daughters, all graduates of Granbury High School, two sons-in-law, and two outstanding grandchildren! We have lived in Granbury since March, 1974, when I became pastor of Acton Baptist Church. I enjoy wood working and have made several pieces of furniture. I love doing mission work and have a

May the Lord give us the kind of loving determination to faithfully follow His example and seek unity and the bond of love and peace as His followers!

partnership in an ongoing work in Juarez, Mexico.

Prayer

Father, please help us cooperate with the prayer of Jesus so that we can make a loving, positive impact on our community and help them know that You love them. May we be more like Jesus in our attitude and actions.

Website:

www.paluxybaptist.org



Join Us
Sunday, November 6 at 6:00 p.m.
ONE NATION UNDER GOD
Multi Congregation
Worship and Prayer Gathering
Shanley Park
Houston and Rucker Streets
Granbury

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