

## TOWARD A GOSPEL APPLICATION

The gospel calls us to a rhythm of “repentance” and “faith.” In repentance we recognize areas in our life where we are not trusting God. By “faith” we turn to God with greater confidence in his provision for us.

1. How does this passage reveal your lack of confidence in God’s plan for your life?
2. What are some ways this passage calls you to trust God on a far deeper level?
3. What are some practical steps you can take to trust God in the coming week?

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2017

## 360 DISCUSSION GUIDE



If you have ever read a Tolkien novel, you are immediately drawn in by his vivid sense of story. You find yourself among a small band of unlikely companions, pushed out of an idyllic setting into a world that is far more treacherous and far more sinister than anything you’d experience in the Shire. It is not hard to imagine yourself cowering beneath the root of an ancient tree as a dark rider pauses on the road above, menacingly sniffing the air, sensing your presence, and shrieking for his companions to join in the hunt. You can feel the darkness closing in on you.

As you read Jesus’s prayer in John 17, there is a similar sense of gloom. Jesus’ followers have been sent into a world that is hostile to everything they stand for. They will face treachery in the Synagogue and from friends and family. They have no chance of surviving apart from the tender care of the Father who keeps them by the power of his name. The scope and the breadth of their mission is staggering. They are bewildered by Jesus’ announcement that he is returning to the Father. They have proven themselves everything but capable, while he was with them. Now he has saddled them with this impossible task and left them on their own.

Jesus recognizes that they have already heard far more than they can bear, so he doesn’t burden them with prolonged good-byes. He reassures them that even though the world will not see him, he will be with them every step of the way. He warns them that they have no chance of success or even survival without him, and then looks up into heaven and prays.

In the final section of his prayer, Jesus prays that his disciples would be unified in their mission to the world, expresses his intense longing for them to be with him and behold his glory, and promises to continually draw them into the unbroken fellowship he has enjoyed with the Father throughout eternity.

### OUR MISSION IN THE WORLD (vv. 20-23)

At first blush, verses 20-23, appears to be a simple prayer for unity, but they are much more than that. They are a prayer for the kind of unity that the Son experiences with the Father, and it is unity with a particular end in mind. Jesus prays that his disciples would be unified for the sake of the world.

*<sup>20</sup> “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—<sup>23</sup>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.*

1. How does Jesus describe the nature of the unity he wants us to experience?
2. How can we possibly achieve and maintain the kind of unity Jesus describes?
3. How would you describe the difference between superficial unity we often strive for and the kind of unity that Jesus prays we will experience?
4. What is the message our unity conveys to the world?
5. What happens when we proclaim the gospel and it's power is not evident in our lives?

### OUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE (v. 24)

Jesus has already told his disciples, “I am going to prepare a place for you, so that you also might be where I am,” In verse 24, Jesus expresses his longing for his disciples to be with him and experience the full measure of his glory. Jesus’ prayer anchors our hearts and minds in the wonderful future he has for us.

*<sup>24</sup> “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.*

1. How would you describe our Lord’s glory to a close friend?
2. What are some of the ways we experience the Lord’s glory now?
3. How will our experience of the Jesus’ glory be different in eternity?
4. How should our anticipation of experiencing the fullness of the Lord’s glory motivate us in our present mission in the world?

### OUR COMFORT IN THE PRESENT (vv. 25-26)

While we look forward to unbridled fellowship with the Father and the Son in the future, we can experience increasing intimacy with the Father and Son throughout our lives. Our comfort and joy in a hostile world is the fellowship we experience with the Father and the Son, and through them the fellowship we experience with one another.

*<sup>25</sup> “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”*

1. What is it Jesus knows that the world does not know?
2. What is it that the disciples know that the world does not know?
3. What is it that Jesus knows that the disciples do not know?
4. How had Jesus made the Father known to the disciples?
5. How would Jesus continue to make the Father known to the disciples (and to us)?
6. What will happen in us (or among us) as Jesus continues to reveal the Father to us?
7. While we are completely dependent on the Son to reveal the Father to us through the Spirit, what are some actions we can take and heart attitudes we can cultivate that will enable us to be more receptive to the Spirit’s work in our lives?