

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

JOHN 16-17

In the history of the United States there have only been fourteen farewell addresses from our presidents.

After George Washington's brilliant speech no other president attempted one until Andrew Jackson did 41 years later. Twelve of the fourteen have been in the modern era. The shortest farewell was by Bill Clinton.

Well, in John 13-17 Jesus delivers His farewell address to His disciples. We'll conclude it tonight...

Jesus is leaving His men, but they won't be alone.

Another *"Helper"* - of the same kind - a Helper similar to Jesus - the Holy Spirit - will take up where Jesus left off, in training His disciples and building up His Church.

I like to call the Holy Spirit, **"the super sub."** His omnipresence extended Jesus' influence globally and generationally, and the Church continued to expand.

In the last few verses of Chapter 15 Jesus mentions the *"Helper"* again. We pick up tonight in John 15:26...

Verse 26, **"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father..."** The Greek word translated *"Helper"* is **"parakletos"** or **"to come alongside to help."**

I love what AB Simpson called the Holy Spirit, **"A God at hand. One, by our side. One that we may call upon in every emergency..."** The Holy Spirit is at work *in us*. The Spirit brings to us the presence of Jesus.

Think of a talented college basketball player - a one-and-done athlete - who turns pro after his first year.

He's a raw talent who is now astronomically wealthy. But He has few life skills to manage his new fortune.

So he hires an agent. And the agent's duty is twofold... He's to protect his client's interests, and teach the young man to manage his fame and fortune.

He's like a life coach. He's grooming his client to be a success on and off the court. He's a personal mentor and handler. [This is the Holy Spirit's job in our lives.](#)

As Christians we've happened upon unprecedented wealth. We've now been given all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. In addition, we share in God's glory.

But we lack the wisdom and skill to make the most of our blessings. We too need a handler - a mentor - a life coach. This becomes the role of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit grooms us. He molds us into the image of Jesus. He's teaching us how to handle our newfound blessings gracefully - to become a winsome witness.

And the end of verse 26 sets out the Holy Spirit's job in a nutshell - Jesus says, **"He will testify of Me."**

The Holy Spirit comes to **"testify of Jesus."**

When I grew up the dean of late-night talk shows wasn't Jimmy Kimmel, or even Jay Leno, but Johnny Carson. *You've probably heard of Johnny Carson!*

Yet a key to Carson's success was a man you never heard of - the long-time producer [Freddy DeCordova](#).

One night during filming the camera panned off stage and focused on Freddy DeCordova. This was both unusual and unplanned. When Freddy realized he was on camera he was furious. He started shouting, "No, no, no! Get the camera on Johnny. He's the star."

And this is the attitude of the Holy Spirit. His job is never to attract attention to Himself. He focuses the spotlight on Jesus. Jesus is the star! The Spirit is the backstage director. His job is to *"testify of Jesus!"*

Which makes for an interesting observation - it may sound odd but it's true: "A church that's preoccupied with the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit - to the exclusion of Jesus - is not being led by the Spirit."

Some charismatic churches get so wrapped up in the things of the Spirit they forget about Jesus. They neglect His Lordship... A Church that's truly Spirit-led will be all about Jesus! *The Holy Spirit will see to it...*

Chapter 15 ends, "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

The disciples will also testify of Jesus.

And they did largely through the writing of the New Testament. God gave them unprecedented access to Jesus so they could report on His life and teachings.

Chapter 16, "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service."

Notice, excommunication from the synagogues is Jewish persecution... But that was just the tip of the iceberg. Rome will also grow a distaste for Christians.

Jesus continues “And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.”

Jesus is being brutally honest with His disciples. Their road ahead will not be easy. Persecution looms. Their one consolation is *the Helper*.

Too often we talk to new or prospective converts about the love, joy, and blessing they'll find in Christ, but we say nothing of the persecution that's promised.

Yet two thousand years later this is still the reality.

We shouldn't scare folks needlessly, but Jesus kept His disciples from stumbling because He was straightforward about what lay ahead. He explained to them the nature of persecution and how to respond.

Here Jesus tells them their fellow Jews will consider killing a Christian a favor to God. If you remember this was exactly the attitude Rabbi Saul adopted in Acts 9.

In 325 AD a council of 318 church leaders met in the Persian town of Nicaea to nail down the deity of Jesus. They were responding to decades of false doctrine.

The creed they produced is probably the most definitive statement on the deity of Jesus ever written. In it, Jesus is said to be “very God of very God.”

Nicaea was a celebrated convocation. For the three previous centuries the Church had been an underground movement. Believers had lived and the Church grew in the cross-hairs of Roman belligerence.

Just prior to Nicaea, the Emperor Constantine had become a Christian and legalized Christianity. At Nicaea, for the first time in 300 years Church leaders were able to gather openly without fear of reprisal.

Here's a moment where you wish you could've been there... Imagine the men in attendance that day - there were 318 delegates from all around the world...

A pastor from Egypt had one-eye. The Romans plucked it out of its socket when he refused to renounce his loyalty to Jesus.... Three men had ugly scars on their faces... A few of the pastors limped on one leg... Most everyone in the room had lost an appendage of some sort - an arm, a hand, a finger, an ear... A lot of the pastors had burn marks from scalding oil... Every man's back was a crisscross of scars...

These men had weathered decades of persecution.

Members of their churches were slaughtered by gladiators, and fed to the lions. These leaders were proof of Christianity's triumph. As Jesus said in John 15, the road would be hard, but *the Helper* will insure that Jesus' disciples "*should not be made to stumble.*"

Verse 5, "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.” Jesus’ departure meant the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Even though it was hard to grasp it at the time, Jesus knew this would be an advantage.

The man, Christ Jesus was limited to one place at a time. The Holy Spirit would be with all believers, in all places, at all times. For Christianity to go global it was necessary for the Jesus to be replaced by the Spirit.

Beautiful and true is St. Augustine’s prayer, “You ascended from before our eyes, and we turned back grieving, only to find you in our hearts” - *the Holy Spirit!*

Jesus says of the Spirit, “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...” During His ministry on earth Jesus upset the apple cart. He changed the rules of religion.

Jesus redefined “*sin*” - true “*righteousness*” - and “*judgment.*” Now it was the Holy Spirit’s job to convince the world that Jesus was right and everyone else had been wrong. His job was to “*convict the world...*”

“Of sin, because they do not believe in Me...”

In Judaism “*sin*” was the violation of rabbinical rules.

Sin was a code infraction - a breach of law. But the Holy Spirit defined sin as an affront to a person, Jesus.

Sin is the rejection of Jesus. It’s a breach of love. Jesus bore our sins on His shoulders. Now the only unpardonable sin is the sin of spurning our Savior.

He also convicts the world “of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more...”

Remember, the Pharisees stressed outward righteousness. Theirs was a paltry, stilted legalism.

But Jesus exhibited a new brand of righteousness.

His life was a ballet of beauty and truth - an opus of love and inward purity. When the disciples looked at Jesus, for the first time they saw true righteousness - *but it was something they could never imitate.*

Righteousness is not a dance you can choreograph and teach. I could never be a great dancer because I don't have the rhythm. You can't live out what you don't have in you. And this is the key to righteous living.

The life Jesus lived, He plants inside us. The Spirit makes me truly righteous from the inside out. Jesus went to the Father; while the Spirit came to our hearts.

And the Spirit convicts the world “of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” We live in a world where often the wicked prosper, and tragically the good guys wind up on the short end of the stick.

We would all like for God to judge people on an individual, case-by-case basis. But God heaped up all sin into one pile - and with one bold stroke settled the score for all time. On the cross God declared the world to be guilty. Every sin was placed on Jesus' innocent shoulders. On the cross sin was sentenced to death.

The price Jesus paid forgave us, and defeated our accuser. In fact, the judgment that's yet to come is a formality. It's just the implementation of the judgment that occurred then. Today, the Spirit is grabbing hearts and bringing people under the shadow of the cross.

Verse 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." Jesus knew the disciples were in overload. He wanted to tell them more, but at the moment they lacked the ability to digest any more.

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." The Holy Spirit will guides us into all truth. He will become our teacher.

We have earthbound minds, whereas God's truth is heavenly. We need the Spirit's help to understand.

It's interesting to compare 15:13 with John 14:26.

There Jesus promised the Spirit would bring to their remembrance what Jesus spoke - *the Gospels*.

Here He will guide them into all truth - *the Epistles*. **And** He will tell them things to come - *the Revelation*.

Put the Lord's promises all together and the Spirit's insights constitute what we call the New Testament.

In addition, verse 14, "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

This is important... The Holy Spirit's message is always in harmony with the teaching and nature of Jesus. The *Spirit of God* syncs up with the *Son of God*.

The Spirit glorifies Jesus. As the Lord said, "*He takes what is Mine and declares it to you.*" In other words, where the Spirit guides us Jesus has already taken us.

"A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father." The "*little while*" interval that Jesus mentions could have two meanings... It may refer to the three days between His death and resurrection. Or it could be the time between Jesus' ascension and the rapture.

Don't get tripped up by the phrase, "*little while.*"

With God time is relative. In light of eternity 2000 years is but a nanosecond. Ever notice how thirty minutes in a dentist's chair - or on a treadmill - feels like months. Whereas thirty minutes with your sweetheart feels like seconds... time is always relative.

Verse 17, "*Then some of His disciples said among themselves, 'What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?' They said therefore, 'What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying.'*" They were all confused - but because of pride no one wanted to appear dense - so no one asked.

"*Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, 'Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I*

said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'?

Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy." He's obviously speaking of His crucifixion; then resurrection.

"A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world."

A woman with four or five children is proof of what Jesus is saying... *She forgets the agony of childbirth.*

Apparently, the glee that follows the birth of a baby makes the grunting that got the baby here no big deal.

It really is amazing, I don't think there's any other experience in life where the pendulum swings quite so far so fast. One moment a delivering mom is screaming, "*Never again.*" Then five seconds after the baby arrives the very same woman is in sheer elation.

This was the same sort of swing the disciples experienced that first Easter morning when they discovered Jesus' resurrection. "Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you."

Verse 23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing." In other words, all your questions will be answered.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” I’m sure they had prayed to the Father, but never in the name of the Son. They had never trusted Jesus to intercede for them.

Yet after His ascension to heaven this becomes His chief ministry. Jesus is our advocate with the Father. He is the One who takes our requests to God’s throne.

Why would anyone want to pray through the saints or through Mary? Why would either of them have more clout than *God’s sinless Son*? That’s an insult to Jesus.

The saints and Mary aren’t listening to your prayers.

Right now they’re before the throne of God giving Jesus praise. It’s Jesus’ job to intercede for His peeps.

"These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father." They’ll be able to understand.

“In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world.”

When Jesus intercedes for us it’s not as if He’s overcoming a reluctance on the Father’s part to bless us. *What comforting words He adds here, “the Father Himself loves you.”* God wants to answer our prayers.

Jesus gives us access to God, He doesn't change the Father's heart toward us. *He's always loved us...*

“Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.”

His disciples said to Him, "See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God." I get the sense these men are pretending to know more than they do.

“Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?" In other words, are you guys ready to face the challenges to your faith that are coming - *as if you know it all?*

Verse 32, “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone.” At that moment the disciples sounded so confident, but soon they'll abandon Him. They'll be *scattered* and their confidence *shattered*.

Yet Jesus remains assured, “And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” Jesus will never be completely abandoned. His Father was with Him...

But Jesus will be betrayed by these self-confident disciples. They will abandon Him in His hour of need. They'll be scattered. Only His Father will be faithful.

And we too, if we follow Jesus, will have our trials...

Jesus says, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” Life in this

world will not be all sunshine and smooth sailing - *“in the world you will have tribulation.”*

For a follower of Jesus this world is hostile territory. We're guaranteed to take some licks and absorb some jabs. At times we'll feel like the devil's dartboard.

But in the midst of this tribulation Jesus says to *“be of good cheer”* for He promises us His perfect peace.

Here's a great definition for peace, *“It's knowing that you possess adequate resources.”* **Peace is knowing I've got whatever I need for the challenges I face.** It's the assurance I can tackle life - head on - in Christ!

Notice too, Jesus says *“I have overcome the world.”*

When the great French reformer, Theodore Beza, was brought before the king, he made this statement, *“Sire, it is truly the lot of the Church to endure blows and not to strike them. But please remember that the Church is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.”*

The Protestant Reformers in England had a motto they lifted from the burning bush passage in Exodus. *“Nevertheless, it was not consumed.”* This is how you have to close each new chapter of church history.

Though the world beats at us and rips us apart we're not consumed. When Jesus rose from the dead He defeated all the forces that nailed Him to the cross. We too are now overcomers when we put our trust in Him.

Chapter 17 begins, *“Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said...”* John 17 is often called, **“The Holy of Holies of the New Testament.”**

This is what Jesus prays just prior to His arrest.

This prayer is the prelude to the prayer in Luke 22 that Jesus concluded, "Not My will but Yours be done."

Jesus *pours* out His heart, and by the end of His prayer His *pores* are oozing sweat like great drops of blood. This is an emotional moment in the Garden of Gethsemane, or as the word means, "the garden of crushing." Like an olive Jesus is being squeezed.

I've heard it said, "If you really want to know someone's heart; then listen to them pray." And we discover a lot about Jesus by studying this prayer.

This night began in the Upper Room; then they walked across the Kidron Valley to the Garden of Gethsemane. The disciples have now kicked out the fire, and unrolled their sleeping bags - but Jesus walks off a short distance and bears His heart in prayer...

"Jesus... lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come." Jesus had always been on a strict timetable. Three times - in John 2:4, 7:30, and 8:20 - we're told, "(His) hour had not yet come."

Jesus refused to take His cues from people. He was never pressured by circumstances - never hurried into a premature maneuver. His timing was impeccable, because He set His watch to the Father's clock.

It's true, if you don't have a plan for how you're going to use your time - people will plan your time for you.

The key to living a life that counts for Christ is not *doing it all*, but *following God's call*. Are you doing what the Father says for you to do, when He says to do it?

Jesus prays to Father that the hour has come to “**Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You...**” Remember, the cross was Jesus' moment of glory. It's what He came to the world to accomplish. His obedience to the cross brought the Father great glory.

But it was after the cross that the Father glorified the Son. After His ascension, Jesus sat down on the right hand of His Father. He was crowned with glory!

Hebrews 12:2 says of Jesus, “**Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.**” Jesus endured the pain because His eye was on the prize - the pleasure of His Father. The **glory of the Father** got Him through the **gory of the cross!**

In verse 2 Jesus prays, “**As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**” Notice eternal life is not so much *longevity of life*, as it is a *quality of life*.

Eternal life is knowing Jesus. Remember, it doesn't begin when you get to heaven, an everlasting-quality of life starts the moment you open your heart to Jesus.

Verse 4, “**I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**”

Recall Jesus' final words on the cross, "It is finished." It's obviously an echo of His prayer here. Jesus always finishes what He starts - *which includes His work in us.*

Yet, let's think this through... At this point in history, were are the blind eyes able to see, or all the lame legs able to walk? Had all the sinners repented of their sins? The answer is "No." Apparently, Jesus didn't come "to do it all." Even the Son of God didn't feel like He had to do everything. He had some select tasks that God gave Him, and Jesus was faithful to do them.

"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." Jesus is longing for home. From eternity past He dwelt with His Father in glory. But He has laid aside that eternal glory, He's humbled Himself as a man, become a child of time, and an resident of Earth.

But now that His mission is almost complete, He's looking forward to returning to His former glory.

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me."

Verse 9, "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in

them.” Throughout Jesus’ prayer there’s a beautiful harmony between the Father and the Son. What belongs to Jesus belongs to the Father, and vice versa. They enjoy a seamless relationship.

This makes the separation that later occurs on the cross the more momentous. When Jesus cries, *“Why have You forsaken Me?”* It’s a feeling He’s never felt.

Jesus continues to pray, *“Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.”*

On the eve of Jesus’ crucifixion - on the night He was betrayed and arrested - just hours before His departure from this world - *as if He didn’t have enough concerns* - He prayed for unity among His followers.

Yet when you look at the church today - fraught with schism, and division, and competition among us - *you wonder what happened?* If the Church is the body of Christ; then we’re an uncoordinated, and spastic body.

Early church father, Augustine, got so exasperated with the divisions that existed in his day, he wrote, *“The clouds roll with thunder that the House of the Lord shall be built throughout the earth; and these frogs sit in their marsh and croak - ‘we are the only Christians!’”*

Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:3, we should *“endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.”*

We can't create spiritual harmony. It’s a work of the Holy Spirit, *but we can work to preserve our unity.*

We can avoid favoritism, and cliquishness, and prejudicial judgments. We can be kind, tolerant, forgiving. We cut each other some slack. We can love.

I think it's interesting that Jesus prayed **we would be one just as He and the Father were one**. The Godhead is a blend of unity and diversity. God is one God, but three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All three persons are equal, but very different.

Our oneness should also be a combination of unity and diversity. Oneness doesn't ignore our uniqueness and distinctiveness. A people can have *unity* and still enjoy their *diversity*. In fact, real unity respects and is empathetic toward the very real differences that exist.

Spiritual oneness is not the denial of our differences, but the realization that our *one commonality* is greater than all *our differences*. When you and I stay focused on Jesus it causes everything else to fade away.

Christian unity is *not* **synchronized swimming**.

Of all the Olympic sports, synchronized swimming has to be the hokiest. Two women dressed alike, and look alike, jump in the pool together, and mimic each other's moves and gestures. The goal is **uniformity**.

Whereas, **pairs figure skating** is the opposite.

Teammates skate in tandem. But they don't *copy* each other. They *complement* each other. Pairs skating is a beautiful sport. Synchronized swimming is hokey.

This is the difference between *uniformity* and *unity*.

Jesus doesn't care about *uniformity*. He prays for *our unity* - not *our uniformity*. We should celebrate our differences. We're enriched by variety and diversity.

Several times now I've officiated Nigerian weddings, and gone to Nigerian celebrations. *I know God doesn't make mistakes, but several times I've told Kathy I think I should've been born Nigerian.* I love the culture.

Nigerians are all about *family*, and *faith*, and *fun*.

Hey, I was born a white Southerner - a long way from Lagos - but I feel a great unity with my Nigerian family.

We're diverse, but united. A spiritual connection can bring together different people... The goal is not for us to be Christian clones - or *synchronized saints*.

I'm leery of any church where everybody looks alike.

Jesus prayed for our unity. And we achieve real unity by merging our differences, and blending them under the overarching goal of bringing glory to God's Son.

Verse 12, "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

All twelve disciples denied the Lord Jesus, and ran away - but they were kept by God's power, and they made their way back. Judas was the one, lost soul.

Jesus called Judas, "*son of perdition.*" And do you know the only other person in Scripture who's called by this same name? *The Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:3).*

In verse 13 Jesus continues His prayer, “But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.”

Jesus’ ultimate goal was to spread His joy.

“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.” *Have you ever wondered why Jesus didn’t transport us to heaven the moment we’re saved?*

That would eliminate quite a few problems, but that wasn’t His desire. He wants us to struggle with the pull of this world - temptation and opposition. *It’s resistance training.* Without resistance we don’t get stronger.

As the old saying goes, “**We’re to be *in the world*, but not *of it*.**” We can **blend in culturally** as long as we **stick out spiritually**. We need to be *in the world* building bridges to lost people, but if we’re *of the world* no one will see the need to cross the bridges we build.

We need to live for God - boldly and attractively - and display godly alternatives to the world’s values.

There’s an illustration you’ve heard, but it’s so true. For a boat to be useful it has to be in the water. But let the water get into the boat and you’ve got problems.

Likewise, the Church should be in the world, but woe if the world gets in the Church. That sinks our witness.

In verse 16 Jesus prays for His disciples “They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” The word “*sanctify*” means “to set apart or treat as special.”

People absorbed in God’s truth, the pages of the Bible, will be different people. *And in a good way. Love will flavor their dealings and integrity their character.*

They’ll march to a different drummer. *God’s truth is diametrically opposed to this world’s wisdom.*

“As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.” Here’s where we could camp out for weeks. *How did Jesus enter the world?* Philippians 2:5-10 details the attitude behind the incarnation.

Rather than flaunt His status, He made no appeal to His reputation... Rather than flex His muscle, Jesus served... Rather than focus on His superiority, He identified with our weaknesses... Rather than force His own will, He submitted to the will of the Father...

Jesus is praying that we too will adopt the same attitude toward life and others as He demonstrated.

Verse 19, “And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 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.” This is an incredible verse. **Two thousand years ago, Jesus prayed specifically for you**

and me! He prays for disciples, yet future, who will trust in Him.

The unity Jesus prays for and desires in His Church stretches across continents, ages, and generations.

A man was once visiting a mental hospital, where he noted the hospital was understaffed. There were only three guards in charge of hundreds of dangerous inmates. The man asked a guard, "Don't you fear these people will use their numbers and overpower you?"

The guard replied, "*No, no, lunatics never unite.*"

We likewise need to smarten up. There is no such thing as a *Lone Ranger Christian*. God wants us united and supportive - *in harmony with each other*. We can accomplish much more together, than we can a part.

Verse 22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 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."

If you're walking down the street and see a lone penny there's a good chance you won't even bother to pick it up. But if you see a handful of pennies - or a roll of pennies - you might put them in your pocket.

The point is Christians can attract more attention in a large group than we can by ourselves. Bring a lost person into a community that loves each other with Jesus' love - and they'll want to learn more.

Verse 24, “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”

We can only imagine the intense love the Father has for His only begotten Son. It was a love formed before the beginning of time. Yet the Father gave up His beloved Son to die in our place! *He must love you too.*

The chapter closes, “O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”