

^Better Together^
Be United with One Another

Main Point: Jesus is praying for us to be a community of unity.

- Judges 20:11
- Psalm 133:1
- Jeremiah 32:38-39
- Romans 15:5-6
- 1 Corinthians 1:10-11
- Galatians 3:28
- 1 Peter 3:8

John 17:1 - *“When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said...”*

This is the true “Lord’s Prayer.” The prayer we commonly refer to as the “Lord’s Prayer” is actually the disciple’s prayer.

Three themes in His prayer:

- **For Himself...** that He may be glorified. (John 17:1-5)
- **For the disciples...** to be sanctified. (John 17:6-19)
- **For future followers...** to be unified. (John 17:20-26)

John 17:11 - *“And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”*

John 17:20-23 - *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word. That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”*

1. The parameters of oneness include all believers.

John 17:21 – *“That they may all be one...”*

Abandon extreme separatism. Some believers refuse to acknowledge there are true Christians in other churches.

Avoid ecumenical sloppiness. There are doctrinal differences and biblical distinctions which must be maintained. Truth alone must determine our alignments.

Unity doesn't mean uniformity. We have different gifts, abilities, personalities, thoughts, and opinions. We're not called to be the “same,” we're called to be one.

2. The pattern for oneness is linked to the unity within the Trinity.

John 17:11 – *“...that they may be one, even as we are one.”*

John 17:21 – *“...that they also may be in us...”*

John 17:22 – *“...that they may be one even as we are one.”*

3. The purpose of oneness is to accelerate evangelism.

John 17:21 – *“...so that the world may believe...”*

John 17:23 – *“...so that the world may know that you sent me...”*

A divided Christian community denies, by its behavior, the message it proclaims.

4. The practice of oneness puts God's reputation on display to the world.

John 17:22 – *“The glory that you have given me I have given to them...”*

When we are united, the world will stand up and take notice of God because they will see Him glorified in us.

Mathew 5:16 – *“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

Oneness gives credence to our claims. Specifically, according to **John 17:23**, the world will know two things:

- **God's Mission:** He sent His Son to be Savior of the world.
- **God's Message:** God loves Christ-followers as much as He loves Jesus.

5. The point of oneness is for us to be absolutely united.

John 17:23 – *“...I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one...”*

Our unity with Christ and our submission to Him should give us a spirit of humility and sweet harmony with other Christ followers.

Jesus is praying for us to be a community of unity.

Steps to Unity

How can I be an answer to Jesus' prayer by fostering unity within the community at Cavanaugh?

1. Be a grower.

2 Peter 3:18 – *“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

Distance from God can cause discord with others.

2. Be a peacemaker.

Proverbs 11:13 – *“A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.”*

Remember this rule about gossip: “The more interesting it is, the more likely it is to be false.”

Romans 12:18 – *“If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”*

3. Be a uniter.

Ephesians 4:3 – *“Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”*

Discussion Questions

1. What is the definition of unity?
2. Of all the verses on unity, which one speaks to you the most? What does it tell you?
3. What stands out to you from the prayer of Jesus in John 17?
4. Why is unity among believers important? What does it say about us?
5. What harm comes from division among believers? Why is this an effective weapon Satan uses against us?
6. The disciples were faithful in spreading the Word. Are you being faithful in spreading the Word? How are you spreading the Word to others?
7. Who are we to be at one with? Does this include the past, present, and future? How is this possible?
8. How do all of our different gifts, abilities, personalities, thoughts, and opinions work together in unity?
9. How does a divided Christian community deny, by its behavior, the message it proclaims?
10. How does the way we act display God's reputation to the world? Are you portraying a positive or negative image of God's reputation?
11. How does unity with other believers give us a spirit of humility? Why is humility an important characteristic to have as believers? How does a lack of humility create division among believers?
12. Have you noticed your personal relationships being affected when you are distant from God? Briefly share an example. What is the connection between the two?
13. Is there someone you are not getting along with right now? What do you need to do to reconcile with that person? What is or has prevented you from reconciling with someone?
14. What is something you can do this week to bring unity or maintain unity of the Spirit?
15. Who is someone you can encourage this week?