

Message Four

**The Lord's Prayer in John 17
for His Glorification and for the Oneness of the Church as the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: John 17:1-24

- I. The Lord's prayer in John 17 was for the glorification, the manifestation, the expression, of the Triune God; God's eternal purpose is to manifest, to express, Himself—vv. 1-5; Gen. 1:26; Eph. 3:8-11:**
- A. Christ was the unique grain of wheat containing the divine life with the divine glory; when the shell of His humanity was broken through His crucifixion, all the elements of His divinity—His divine life and His divine glory—were released—John 12:24:
 - 1. The release of the glory of Christ's divinity was to release Himself into man as the fire of life to burn on the earth—Luke 12:49-50.
 - 2. Christ as the sevenfold intensified, life-giving Spirit today is a burning fire within us; we have been brought together by this fire, and now we are burdened that this fire would burn many others—Rev. 4:5; 5:6; cf. 2 Tim. 1:6-7; Rom. 12:11.
 - B. The release of the glory of Christ's divinity was His being glorified by the Father with the divine glory in His resurrection through His death—John 12:23-24; Luke 24:46.
 - C. Christ prayed that His Father would glorify Him, and the Father answered His prayer by resurrecting Him; for Christ to be glorified was for Him to be resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit—John 17:1; Acts 3:13-15; John 7:39b; Luke 24:46; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 - D. The issue of Christ's glorification was the producing of a universal incorporation for the expression of the Triune God, whose unique attribute is oneness, the oneness of coinherence—John 14:10-11, 20; 17:21:
 - 1. The three of the Triune God were incorporated from eternity; this means that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit mutually indwell one another, that is, They coinhere—14:10-11.
 - 2. The consummated Triune God and the regenerated believers became an incorporation in the resurrection of Christ; this means that the Son is in the Father, we are in the Son, and the Son as the Spirit is in us to make us an enlarged, divine-human incorporation who are coinhering with the coinhering Triune God in His oneness for His glory—vv. 20, 17; 17:11, 21.
 - E. In the Lord's last words to the believers in John 14—16, there are three concrete expressions of this glory: the Father's house (the church) in 14:2, the branches of the vine (the constituents of the Body of Christ) in 15:1-5, and a newborn corporate man (the new man) in 16:21:
 - 1. All three denote the church, showing that the church is the glorious increase produced by Christ through His death and resurrection—12:23-24.
 - 2. In this glorious increase Christ, the Son of God, is glorified, causing God the Father also to be glorified in Christ's glorification, that is, to be fully expressed through the church—Eph. 3:19-21.
 - 3. This expression needs to be maintained in the oneness of the Triune God; therefore, the Lord prayed in particular for this matter in His concluding prayer in John 17.

II. The Lord's prayer in John 17 was for the oneness of the church as the Body of Christ, the oneness of the believers in the Triune God:

- A. The first level of oneness is the oneness in the Father's name and by the Father's divine life—vv. 6-13:
 - 1. The Father's name denotes the person of the Father, the Father Himself as the source of life, the source of oneness—vv. 6, 11; 5:26, 43:
 - a. We must take the Father as the source of life and blessing—cf. Matt. 14:19; Rom. 11:36.
 - b. We must not live by our human life but by the Father's divine life in our spirit to enjoy our all-inclusive sonship—John 6:57; Rom. 8:15-16.
 - 2. The Father's life with His nature is the element of the oneness—John 17:2; cf. Eph. 1:4-5; Heb. 2:10-11; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. The second level of oneness is the oneness in the reality of the sanctifying word—John 17:14-21:
 - 1. The word is the truth (v. 17), and the truth is the Triune God (14:6; 1 John 5:6b); to be sanctified by the reality of the word is to be sanctified by the Triune God Himself.
 - 2. The word, which is the truth, sanctifies God's people from the world (John 17:17) and keeps them from the ruler of the world, the evil one (v. 15):
 - a. The Father's word of reality sanctifies us and makes us pure, delivering us from the mixed-up world to separate us unto our God, the God of purity—cf. Psalms 12:6.
 - b. The more a person is in the word of God, the purer he becomes—119:140.
 - 3. The Father's sanctifying word is the means of our oneness, bringing us into the sphere of oneness—John 17:21; Eph. 5:26.
- C. The third level of oneness is the oneness in the divine glory for the expression of the processed, mingled, and incorporated Triune God—John 17:22-24:
 - 1. The oneness of all the believers in the divine glory is the oneness in the expressed sonship with the Father's life and nature—v. 22; 5:26.
 - 2. The glory of God is the expression of God; this splendid expression of divinity delivers us from ourselves and makes us fully one—cf. Rev. 21:11.
 - 3. In this stage of the oneness the self is fully denied:
 - a. We must be saved from our self, including ambition, self-exaltation, and opinions and concepts—John 17:21-24; Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3 John 9.
 - b. If we would give up the self, lose the self, and turn to the spirit, right away we will be in the reality of the Body—Eph. 2:22; John 16:13.
 - c. If we live by our life with our nature to express ourselves, there will be no glory of God; in the expression of ourselves there is division.
 - d. To live and act in the Father's life with the Father's nature to express the Father is glory, and it is in this glory that we all are one.
 - 4. Our Christian life should be a life of "glory to glory"—2 Cor. 3:16-18.

III. We need to emphasize the oneness that the Lord has given us and preserve the oneness of the Spirit by being mingled constantly with the Triune God (thus nullifying the natural man, the world with Satan, and the self) to satisfy the Lord's desire—Eph. 4:1-6.