



Jesus Prays for Us!

John 17

17:3 – What does it mean to know God?

To know God is to have a personal relationship with Him that will last for eternity. Our greatest need is to have a personal relationship with the Lord. John 17:3 says, *“this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God”* (NIV). God provided us the Bible so that we can know Him. Since God is Almighty enough to have accurately brought us His Word even using flawed people, we should trust it as being true. And since God wants us to experience a personal relationship with Him, we can understand the main and plain things of the Bible directly ourselves without needing some intermediary to interpret what God really said. So our relationship with the Lord should be enough of a priority to study the Bible every day.

17:4 – What did Jesus complete that should help us have a sense of calling in our work?

The Lord calls most of us to represent Him in whatever work we do. God the Father sent His only Son who shares His almighty nature into our world as Jesus Christ to make it possible for our sins to be forgiven. But before Jesus did His wonderful work of paying our sin debt by dying on the cross, most of His career was in the secular field of carpentry. Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed to the Father in John 17:4, *“I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do”* (NIV). That work certainly included His tenure as a carpenter’s apprentice. As Jesus represented the Father in His secular career, God wants us to do the same in what ever we do.

17:4 – What does it mean to complete the work God has given us to do?

Our difficulties often tempt us to prematurely leave our current work. But life is always better when we are in God’s timing. Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed to the Father in John 17:4, *“I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do”* (NIV). We likewise bring glory to God when we complete the work He intends for us. Jesus did not cut short His tenure on earth but went the full course to die on the cross for our sins. So before we consider our current work to be finished, we should make sure God considers it done. The Lord reveals the path we should take in our work by closing and opening doors of opportunity for us to bring Him greater glory.

17:10 – How may we glorify God?

We glorify God through our actions in this world. In John 17:10, Jesus said that glory has come to Him through His followers. We glorify Christ when our associates know we follow Jesus by our working references to Him in the course of everyday conversations. As representatives of Jesus in the world, we must remove any hindrances to bringing Him glory. We should not have even the appearance of immortality in our lives; any moral failings tarnish Jesus’ good name. Also, we should shun pride and give the Lord the credit for the good results of our work. As our associates see how applying the Lord’s principles make us more content with our lives, some will be attracted to Jesus which is the glory the Lord seeks.

17:6-11 – How may we be in the world but not of the world?

The Bible refers to “the world” as a system of values typified by Satan himself, centered on power, deceit, and self-will. 1 John 2:16 says that “the world” includes sinful human cravings, the lusting of the eyes, and the boasting of what we have done. Jesus said in John 17:6-11 that while His followers are not of the world, we are still in the world to serve a purpose. Our being in the world does not grant us license to become like the world. We betray Jesus by loving the things of the world. We should resist the pervasive attractions of advertising, self-help psychology, public opinion polls, and charismatic public figures. We must not allow the media and our society to define who we are.

17:14 – Why does the world hate Christians and how may we over come that hate?

Many of our associates see our allegiance to Jesus as a threat to the way of life they love. Jesus said of His followers in John 17:14, *“the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world”* (NIV). Following Jesus threatens the cultural structure. His rules are different and attractive but loyalty to Christ means disloyalty to the world. Since we have been there, we should be sensitive enough to the perspective of our unbelieving associates to build bridges to them with common ground. The more we relate to unbelieving associates on a personal level, the more they’ll see the difference Christ makes in our lives. Also, if we are to win our associates over to Christ, we must never cross over our bridges to the old way of life ourselves.

17:14-15 – How may we cope with the things we hate about our life in this world?

There should be some aspects of our life that we hate if we are growing closer to Jesus. 1 John 2:15 says, *“If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him”* (NIV). The world is a system of selfishness, materialism, errant philosophies, and godlessness. Christians are in the world, but not of the world per John 17:14-15. The closer we get to Jesus, the more the flaws of this fallen world become evident. So when we encounter things which make us long for a better world, we should take heart because God has promised a perfect one. And we should be encouraged by our sensitivity to the world’s condition. Indeed, we should be concerned if we become content with things as they are.

17:17 – What are the benefits of being sanctified?

We must be sanctified to have a relationship with the Lord. God is holy. So in order for us to be close to Him, we must be holy. Jesus makes this possible by having paid the penalty for our sin by His death on the cross. We may be closer to God by cooperating with Him to be more like Jesus in the way we think and act even. Jesus prayed to the Father on our behalf in John 17:17 to, *“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth”* (NIV). We become sanctified, or made holy through believing and applying God’s Word in our life. Scripture points out sin, motivates us to confess, renews our relationship with Christ, and guides us back to the right path.

17:21-22 – Why is unity among believers so important?

Jesus' great desire for His followers was that they would be unified. This unity is a powerful witness to the reality of God's love. Jesus prayed in John 17:21-22, *“that all of them may be one... so that the world may believe that you have sent me”* (NIV). Christian unity enables the good news about Christ to make its clearest impact. A lack of unity among Christians frequently drives people away. We help unify the body of Christ in our society by praying for Christian associates, building them up in our conversations and cooperating with them. When our unbelieving friends recognize the camaraderie of Christians, they will be attracted to Jesus.

17:25 – What can we do about the world not knowing Jesus?

Christians are in the world to lead their associates to a correct view of God because *“the world does not know”* God as Jesus said in John 17:25. Without having a relationship with Jesus, people craft their own view of God using flawed sources such as the popular media which reflects a worldview that opposes the Lord and His followers. It is politically correct to emphasize serious failures of Christians such as the Crusades, the Inquisition, and other genocidal acts implying that God or the Bible prompted these injustices. But these acts were done in ignorance or blatant disobedience to God's Word. When we

observe cultural perspectives that defame Christ, we need to point out the prejudice and make sure our associates know the truth. This may lead to a deeper conversation that will make an eternal difference for someone.