

What God Wants For Us

God is always at work in his world through his people. From the time of Abraham, God set his affections on a group of people to be priests in this world. The work of priests is to bring others closer to God. Many of the Old Testament laws are concerned with how people treat each other. Unfortunately, Israel neglected their relationship with God and they did not take care of each other. They forgot about the poor and they took advantage of the needy.

God wants so much more for his people. He wants us to be in loving community and to be surrounded by people who genuinely care for each other. He wants us to be family.

Today let's look at John 17. This prayer gives us great insights into what God wants us to experience in the church. Jesus' plea to God for his disciples was not only for protection but also for unity. Jesus wants his followers to be one. He wants to be united as God's family.

Read John 17 together and think about these questions –

1. Talk about some of the key elements of unity you see in this passage.
 - Does obedience make any difference (vs 6)?
 - What about “knowing” God (vs 3)? What place does that have?
 - What impact does verse 24 have on unity between Christians?
2. What is the ultimate purpose for unity in the church?
3. Spend some time in I Corinthians 12. How can a good understanding of giftedness in the church bring about unity?
 - Why are gifts given to individual Christians?
 - What image does Paul employ to convince us about our need for unity in the church?
 - What two attitudes does Paul discuss that are harmful in the church?
 - Who decides what part of the Body each member is?
 - How are verses 25, 26 important to having real unity in the church?
 - Describe what Paul might mean by a less honorable part or an “unpresentable” part (22, 23).