

That We Become One

B. Purpose (Significance) of this Study

B1. Promote: Unity in Understanding

We are blessed by having access to the most intimate of prayers: Jesus the Son praying to the Father our God. Recorded for us in The Gospel of John, chapter 17; in verse 11, Jesus prays,

“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.*”

Clearly, this supplication was for those alive on the night of Christ’s betrayal. His disciples, whom God had given him, were to be one as the Son and Father are one. Thankfully, Jesus did not pray for only them, but for us as well! As Jesus continues his prayer in John 17:20-21,

“I do not pray for these alone, but also *for those who will believe in Me through their word;* ²¹*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.*”

Amen. Jesus prophesized that night regarding us: We who believe not by sight but by faith, by hearingⁱ the words written down. The words were written by those who experienced the Word made fleshⁱⁱ: Jesus’ apostles. We who believe are an answer to Jesus’ prayer, as well as the fruition of his prophecy. It follows, then, that we are to be one. Additionally, we are to be an example to the world: that the world may believe! Have we fulfilled our role in this? Are we one as Jesus prayed?

ⁱ ROM 10:17, then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

ⁱⁱ JOHN 1:14, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Our diversity makes us unique, still Jesus desires our unity. While maintaining our distinction, how are we then to be one? The scope of Jesus' prayer "*that they all may be one*" goes somewhat beyond our comprehension, yet we can piece together, with the help of Scripture, the objective of his intent. Paul helps us to grasp this in Romans 15:5-6,

"Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, *that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Paul further expands the concept of being one in Christ when he writes in Galatians 3:28,

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for *you are all one in Christ Jesus.*"

Certainly, there is more than we can realize concerning the topic of our unity. However immeasurable the definition of us becoming one is, the obvious and simplest explanation will suit well enough to guide our conduct, and will serve to allow God to work in us and through us to complete His will.

To be one, we must all follow Christ and listen to his voice. Jesus assures us of this with these words from John 10:27-30,

"*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.* ²⁸"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰"I and My Father are one."

To follow Jesus, we must die to our own willⁱⁱⁱ and seek his will. We must give up going our way and relinquish the reins of our life to him, so that our steps are guided by the Lord^{iv}. We must give up our way of thinking and allow Jesus to renew our mind^v. We must give up our stubborn ways and allow Jesus to replace

ⁱⁱⁱ MATH 16:24-25, Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

²⁵ⁱⁱFor whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

^{iv} PRO 16:9, A man's heart plans his way, But *the Lord directs his steps.*

^v ROM 12:2, do not be conformed to this world, but *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

our heart^{vi}. We must give up our lust and allow Jesus control of our body^{vii}. We must give up our burden and take up his cross^{viii}. To be one, we must all give up our life^{ix} and live for Jesus^x.

Thus, to know him and to be known by him is life abundant^{xi}. Our personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the most intimate, sacrificially loving, and rewarding of our lifetime, indeed, of any lifetime. One of the ways Jesus describes this shared familiarity is in John 10:14,

“I am the good shepherd; and *I know My sheep, and am known by My own.*”

The tenth chapter of John also deals with our ability to discern an impostor’s voice^{xii}, which we can only accomplish by familiarizing ourselves with the one, true Shepherd’s voice. Knowing Jesus requires us to listen to this voice alone, the voice of our Lord and Shepherd. We must hear^{xiii} what he says!

Immersing ourselves in the truth makes us less susceptible to be deceived by false teachers, corrupt doctrine, or erroneous interpretation of Scripture. Therefore, to study Revelation, we must allow the Truth^{xiv} to interpret God’s word. It is vital for us to learn correct interpretation of prophecy, remembering that “*no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation*^{xv}”. So, if we begin to stray in our

^{vi} EZE 36:26, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; *I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.*

^{vii} ROM 12:1, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

^{viii} LUKE 9:23, He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and *take up his cross daily*, and follow Me.

^{ix} MARK 8:35, "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but *whoever loses his life for My sake* and the gospel's will save it.

^x PHIL 1:21, For to me, *to live is Christ*, and to die is gain.

^{xi} JOHN 10:10b, I have come that they may have life, and that *they may have it more abundantly.*

^{xii} JOHN 10:2-5, he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for *they do not know the voice of strangers*".

^{xiii} MARK 4:23-24, If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear." ²⁴Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and *to you who hear, more will be given.*

^{xiv} JOHN 14:6, Jesus said to him, "I am the way, *the truth*, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

^{xv} 2PET 1:20, knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.

understanding away from the whole council of God, we are in error. We must prayerfully find His way^{xvi}. For, even Paul clarified this in 1 Corinthians 13:2,

“though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, *but have not love, I am nothing*”.

We must abide in the word to know the Truth^{xvii}. We must keep His word to perfect the love of God in us^{xviii}.

There are certain proofs to tell us where we are concerning the Truth. As John reviews in his letter, 1 John 1:6-7,

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,* and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Our fellowship is a result of walking in His light. It is also a sign that we are practicing truth. So, let us not think that truth is something secret, in which only a select few have access. No, esoteric knowledge is not required to interpret prophecy. For, God tells us this in Isaiah 48:16-17,

“Come near to Me, hear this: *I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit Have sent Me.* ¹⁷Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.”

Our fellowship helps us draw nearer to God as we draw nearer to each other. To be unified while we study Revelation, we are to come together, ‘keep’ the word^{xix}, walk in His light, and practice truth.

^{xvi} PSM 119:1-5, Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the Lord! ²Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart! ³They also do no iniquity; *They walk in His ways.* ⁴You have commanded us To keep Your precepts diligently. ⁵Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes!

^{xvii} JOHN 8:31-32, Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.* ³²ⁿ*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*"

^{xviii} 1JON 2:4-5, He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵*But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him.* By this we know that we are in Him.

^{xix} REV 22:9, he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who *keep the words of this book.* Worship God."