

# ***International Bible Lessons Commentary***

## ***John 17:1-26***

**New American Standard Bible**

***International Bible Lessons***

**Sunday, January 11, 2015**

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The **[International Bible Lesson](#)** (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, January 11, 2015**, is from **John 17:1-26**. Please Note: Some churches will only study **John 17:6-21**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** discusses the questions below to help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the **[International Bible Lessons Commentary](#)** website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study.

## ***International Bible Lesson Commentary***

### **John 17:1-26**

**(John 17:1) Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,**

After Jesus spoke words of encouragement and peace to His disciples about the future and their need to keep trusting that He came from God, Jesus began a prayer to His Father that the Holy Spirit later helped John to remember and record. Jesus prayed about His coming death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven (see John 16:28). Jesus prayed that through these events the Father and the Son would glorify one another.

**(John 17:2) even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.**

The Father gave the Son authority over all people; that would include those who plotted His death. Jesus did not use His authority to stop His persecutors, because He came to die as a substitute for all He came to save. Jesus, who died and rose again to save sinners, became the object of faith in order for believers to receive eternal life (see John 3:16). The Father gave to Jesus all those who would be saved by grace through faith in Him as Lord and Savior.

**(John 17:3) “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**

Jesus defined the meaning of “eternal life” in His prayer. Eternal life involves knowing the Father: the only true God and Jesus Christ, the One the Father sent. Eternal life involves and depends on knowing both the Father and the Son. Knowing the truth about them will fill the believer with true love for them.

**(John 17:4) “I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.**

Jesus taught, healed, cast out demons, raised the dead, fed the multitudes, calmed the stormy sea, and did other things that were part of the work God intended for Him to do. Jesus looked forward to glorifying His Father and finishing His work by obeying Him and dying in our behalf to save us from our sins and their eternal consequences. Jesus said and did what would glorify and point people to the true God. And the Father glorified the Son by pointing people to Him in ways that would lead people to trust in Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

**(John 17:5) “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.**

Jesus did not take His Father’s love for Him and His plans for Him as simple matters of course. Jesus prayed for His Father to keep His promise to Him fully while knowing that the Father would do what He promised and answer Jesus’ prayers. Jesus wanted to return to His place on the throne of God where He sat before the Father created the world through Him, the Word of God (see John 1:1-18).

**(John 17:6) “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.**

Jesus prayed primarily for His disciples and other close followers (see Acts 1:15). The Father gave Jesus’ followers to Him by taking them out of the world that they might enter the Kingdom of God under the rule of Jesus the King (the Messiah). Jesus reported in His prayer that He had made the Father’s true character and nature known to them and they had believed and obeyed the Word of God that Jesus taught them and the crowds. Jesus believed that it was important for His disciples to hear His report in prayer and believe that God, His Father and their Father, accepted His report and work.

**(John 17:7) “Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You;**

Jesus taught in a way that always pointed people to the true God, the Father and the Son. Jesus taught and acted in such a way that people could hear with their ears and see with their eyes that everything Jesus said and did was consistent with the express will of His Father, and the Father blessed and enabled His incarnate Son to do everything Jesus did and all that He taught.

**(John 17:8) for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.**

Jesus always made it clear that He did not speak only on His own authority, even when He spoke with authority. Jesus' words and deeds convinced His followers that He came from God and He was sent by God to them for their benefit and the benefit of all who would hear and believe the good news about and from Jesus.

**(John 17:9) "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;**

In this prayer, Jesus prayed for His followers. He knew what the future would hold in store for each of them. Jesus prayed for them because they were more than His; they also belonged to God the Father. Jesus prayed consistent with what the Father would want for those Jesus would leave behind after He ascended into heaven.

**(John 17:10) and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.**

Because both the Father and the Son are the one true God, the followers of Jesus belong to both of them. What Jesus' followers did and would do in the future would glorify Jesus, would express the fact that they were Jesus' followers, and that fact would explain their actions and words (see Acts 4:13).

**(John 17:11) "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.**

Jesus prayed from the future perspective that He had ascended into heaven. Spiritually speaking, Jesus did not live or abide in the world with a worldly perspective. Jesus lived on earth as the King in the Kingdom of God on earth, but He would soon ascend into heaven. Jesus prayed for their spiritual protection and safety from Satan, because many of His followers would die physically for their faithful obedience to Him. Jesus prayed that His followers would be one in heart, mind, and purpose according to the Word of God, the Truth, even as the Father and He were one in what they taught and did.

**(John 17:12) “While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.**

The one destined to be lost among the disciples was the one who betrayed Jesus in order to fulfill the Scriptures (see John 13:18; Psalms 41:9). Because Jesus is God, the Son of God, He could protect all of His followers from Satan and the world. Jesus’ prayer protected Simon Peter from losing his faith in Jesus even though he denied Jesus (see Luke 22:31-34). Because Judas decided to betray Jesus, Satan entered into Judas and helped him betray Jesus (Luke 22:1-6).

**(John 17:13) “But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.**

Jesus intended that His prayer give confidence and joy to His disciples as they heard Him pray, because they knew that His Father always answered His prayers and fulfilled all of His requests. Jesus wanted the truth that He taught and prayed to give them complete joy when they heard Him and remembered what He prayed (John 14:15-17; 16:22-24; Galatians 5:22-25).

**(John 17:14) “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

Jesus distinguished between the Kingdom of God where He ruled as King and the world that is Satan’s domain spiritually. Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth, so “the world” is the system that opposes Jesus and all of His followers. Jesus and His followers do not belong to the world as adherents of the world system, but live in the Kingdom of God; therefore, Satan and those who belong to him in this world system hate Jesus and His followers. Jesus’ followers have the Word of God, the Word made flesh and the Holy Scriptures, to defeat Satan spiritually and live forevermore.

**(John 17:15) “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.**

The followers of Jesus must remain in the world system without being adherents of or members of the world system in order to share the good news of Jesus Christ and save some from the world, the flesh, the devil, and slavery to sin. Jesus has prayed for and continues to intercede from heaven for His followers to be protected from the evil one, which describes Satan, the demons, and those under the power of Satan to do the devil’s will. Jesus’ prayer in the Gospel of John and His continual praying at the right hand of God has protected millions of Christians for almost 2000 years. Though many Christians have suffered and died as martyrs, Jesus has protected them spiritually, blessed their work on earth, and granted them eternal life.

**(John 17:16) “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

Neither Jesus nor His followers belong to the world. His followers have left the world system and now belong to Jesus and He belongs to them. They live in the Kingdom of God and their membership or citizenship or stewardship is now in God’s Kingdom, where they pray for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. The King has committed himself to protecting all of His subjects and He will always succeed in doing so spiritually in order to grant them eternal life.

**(John 17:17) “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.**

To “sanctify” means “to set apart for a holy use or God’s use.” When believers hear and receive the truth of God in Jesus Christ, Jesus sets them apart for holy use by God. Jesus forgives them and cleanses them from all sin. As righteous in Christ Jesus, Jesus has made them fit for God’s service. God’s word is truth and following the truth is the way of holy service for God and others.

**(John 17:18) “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.**

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-5). The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). God the Father sent Jesus into the world to save all who would believe in Him and give them eternal life (John 3:16). Jesus has sent all of His followers into the world to teach about Him so some will believe in Him and receive eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

**(John 17:19) “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.**

Jesus did what He expected His followers to do in following Him. He went into the world and set himself apart from the world for holy use by God the Father. As He taught the truth in holiness of behavior and speech, those who believed His message and chose to follow Him Jesus cleansed and set apart for God’s holy use in truth. Jesus did not lie or manipulate people to follow Him as those in this world system often do.

**(John 17:20) “I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;**

Jesus prayed and predicted that others would believe in Him through the testimony of His first followers – those He set apart to tell the truth about Him. For almost 2000 years, those Jesus prayed for, including all those who teach this Bible Lesson in various parts of the world, have received all of the blessings that would flow from His prayer with more blessings yet to come and more people yet to believe. We believe in Him

through the Word of God written, the Holy Bible, and His followers continue to share the truth about Him according to the Scriptures.

**(John 17:21) that they may all be one; even 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 sent Me.**

Jesus prayed that we might be one, united in heart, mind, thoughts, beliefs, truth, and purpose based on the word of His disciples – that became the Bible. The Father and Jesus lived and served together in perfect harmony when Jesus came into the world; therefore, many believed that Jesus came from the true God. Jesus prayed for all of His followers to be in agreement according to God's Word in order to seek and save those who would believe in Him through them.

**(John 17:22) “The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;**

God the Father gave Jesus the power to do the works He did to help people believe in Him and that the Father sent Him: the Father gave glory to Jesus. Jesus imparted glory to His disciples so they could work perfectly together as the Father and the Son had worked together so many would believe in Jesus and that Jesus' glory was working through them as God intended. Jesus gave them the glory of God so they could heal the sick and work miracles of compassion that would help people believe in Jesus.

**(John 17:23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.**

The Father and the Son are one divine essence: as divine Persons they have indwelt one another and had perfect love and communication for all eternity, which is truly beyond our human and finite comprehension, but according to the Bible. When Jesus sent (and still sends) His Holy Spirit into His true followers, they know the love of God within them, and some will see the love of God within them as they speak and behave as the true God inspires them; therefore, some will come to believe in Jesus too.

**(John 17:24) “Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.**

The Father will give Jesus all that He desires in His prayer because Jesus always prayed and prays according to the perfect will of God. Jesus had promised to prepare a place in heaven for all of His followers. Now He prays that they will be with Him in heaven when the time is right and they have finished the work He has for them in the world.

Someday, all of Jesus' followers will see His glory in heaven; they will see the love and the glory He had from His Father before they created the universe.

**(John 17:25) “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me;**

The world situation in Jesus' day and today is in spite of God the Father because God is righteous and always does what is perfectly right and loving. Because God is righteous and those in the world system are unrighteous, they do not know God the Father or His Son. However, all those the Father sent to Jesus know the true God. If we know God the Father, it is because the Father sent us to Jesus and we know Jesus.

**(John 17:26) and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”**

Jesus taught and teaches the truth so the love of God can be in us; therefore, the same love that the Father and the Son have for each other indwells everyone who trusts in Jesus with saving faith. Jesus has taught us God's name “Father,” and what His name means; therefore, He and His love can abide in our lives, and we can do His work from love of God and others according to the Scriptures.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. Where did Jesus' first followers come from?
2. What did Jesus say His followers did?
3. What did Jesus do for His disciples?
4. What does it mean when a person says they sanctify themselves? Why did Jesus sanctify himself? What does a person need in order to become sanctified according to Jesus prayer?
5. Why does the world hate Jesus and His followers?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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