

7.1.24: 'Prayers Jesus Prayed – Hearing His Heartbeat' Series. Wk. #5 'Jesus' Prayer for the Church.

Home Group & Individual Study – some suggested questions.

Please read: John Chpt. 17. Additional readings: Heb. 4:12, Heb. 7:26-27, Matt. 5:13-16

Discussion Group Leaders: Please choose all or some of the questions for your discussion and Bible study.

- **What, in your opinion, do you think makes a successful healthy church?**

Jesus' prayer for the church appears to fall into four main characteristics: **truth, holiness, mission, and unity.**

- (v12) It was said during the talk on Sunday that some churches have struggled (and come unstuck) with big questions regarding whether they preserve **truth** over unity or unity over truth. **What evidence is there in John 17 that backs up the fact that truth (the revealed truth about who the Father and Jesus really are) must be the foundation on which our unity is built?**
- Jesus prays for **holiness**. (v15) **How would you explain what it means to 'be holy'? What are your thoughts about the fact that some Christians view holiness as 'separation' from the World.**
- (v18) It was said on Sunday that the church's holiness must never impede the church's **mission**. **What's our mission, and how as a church are we fulfilling it? What more could we do?**
- **What are the two types of unity that Jesus is praying for? How might this unity cause 'the world to believe'? (v21 & 23)**
- There was, on Sunday a quote from John Stott regarding the importance of holding each of the four characteristics in balance. (See quote included). **What are the dangers for a church in getting the balance wrong?**

Additional questions – for further Bible study & reflection.

- In verse 12 who is the ‘one headed for destruction’?
- How do you feel about the fact that Jesus prayed for all would be believers, and that means you & me?
- V3 – How do we get eternal life?
- What is it that Jesus is asking of His Father in the first five verses of John 17? How does Acts 7:56 show that this prayer was answered?

John Stott quotation:

““One of the tragedies of the contemporary church is the tendency we have to break up Christ's vision into bits and pieces; to select one of two of His concerns and to neglect the rest.

*We have no liberty to do that. We may not wander through scripture like a gardener in an herbaceous border, picking a flower here and discarding a flower there. No, we are to stick to **all** the characteristics of a healthy Christian church.”*