

Jesus' Desire for Us

John 17 records Jesus' last prayer before He went to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He cried to God before His crucifixion. We don't have to ask what Jesus was feeling before He was crushed for us. His desire is laid out clearly in John. He opens up His heart and lets us listen in on the most intimate moments of His life on earth.

John 17:24-26 says: "Father I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

"O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

These phrases contain the very reason for which you were created and presented an invitation to know God intimately—to really know Him and be near to His heart. In His first request to His Father, Jesus asks to be near the ones He is about to purchase with His blood. He does not want us simply to be technically His; He wants us to be wholly His.

The bride in Song of Solomon longs for this same intimacy. She says, "Why should I be as one who veils herself by the flocks of your companions?" (Song 1:7). In her poetic language, the bride is essentially

saying: "Jesus, being near Your friends is not good enough! I want to be near You and to truly know You intimately in my own heart."

We long to be close to God because He first longed to be near to us. He is not a God who wanted to redeem us and then stand at a distance. Rather He purchased us with royal blood so that He could put His own Spirit in us and spend now and eternity unveiling His heart to us.

In His second request, Jesus asks that we would see His glory. This is exactly the desire echoed by the bride in Song of Solomon when she did not want to be veiled from seeing the Bridegroom. Our heart cries, "Take away the veil, God!" Jesus' heart also cries out, "Father, I *desire!*" Can you imagine how heaven must have shaken when the God-man spoke that phrase in the garden that night? Can you imagine Him interceding for you right now asking the same thing?

Beloved, that is exactly what Jesus is doing right at this moment. The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us before the Father as our faithful high priest (Heb. 7:25). In this very moment, Jesus is speaking to the Father, who loves you with the same love He lavishes on His Son—He is asking that the glory of who He is would be revealed in your heart.

Jesus' third request in John 17:26 is the greatest of all—that we would love Him. But let's look carefully at this. What kind of love

does Jesus want from us? Does He want us to love Him as a grateful servant loves a benevolent master? No. Does He want us to love Him with whatever we can muster up after surviving a painful past? No. Beloved, when Jesus asked His Father that you and I would love Him, He reached for the greatest measuring rod He could possibly pull out—the amount of love the Father has for His only Son.

When I consider this truth, I always think of little children. Have you ever seen a child spread out his arms, stretching them as wide as he can, to show his parents how much he loves them? Or how about a kid who goes crazy with analogies? “I love you from here to the moon and back, and around the earth a gazillion times!” Jesus reached out as far as He possibly could, beloved, and in doing so He ended any notion that Christianity would be boring or that you and I could allow our pasts or family backgrounds to keep us from loving Him and being transformed into His likeness.

I know this language may seem awkward, but Jesus pulled out His Trinitarian checkbook and wrote you the biggest check He could. He put the whole account at your disposal.

Beloved, it really is that good. Jesus ends His prayer in John 17 by saying that the Holy Spirit’s job description will be to take the love Father God has for His Son and put it in us. This way Christ Himself will be formed in us, and we can love God with the supernatural love He gives us.

The kind of love Jesus is talking about here is eternal and unquenchable. It is a torrent of desire, a raging fire of light and exhilaration. Truly, out of the heart of one who believes in Jesus will flow rivers of living water (see John 7:38). God longs to release a river of pleasure inside you and me. It is a river of fire and of love that is waiting to be released in our hearts.

When we come to know Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit, a river begins to flow in us, a river that has one desired end. The Holy Spirit in us longs to take us into the depths of God to remove the veil from our eyes and to help us see the glorious riches of the man Christ Jesus, converting even the most hostile heart into a torrent of holy affection for God. Do you have this vision for your life? Oh, my friend, if you are bored, I dare say it's your own fault. If you have quit trying to grow in love or have waited for "someday" to take on this pursuit, I beckon you back in to the journey.

Adapted from *A Cry for Justice* by Shelly Hundley, copyright 2011, published by Charisma House.

Hundley uses her story as a backdrop to show how she found healing from pain, guilt and shame of the abuse she endured as a child. Her journey from bitter atheist to wholehearted lover of God is unique. Yet what she learned on this journey is relevant to every person who needs a revelation of Jesus as our

righteous Judge. To order a copy click on this link:



PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 2/27/2012

This week ask the Lord to take you into the depths of God, place His love in you and help you see the glorious riches of Christ so that He can be formed in you. Ask Him for opportunities to carry His love and presence to impact the world around you. Continue to pray for the protection of Israel, as well as those serving in the volatile Middle East. Pray that we, as God's people, would humble ourselves, seek His face and turn from our wicked ways so that the nation would turn back to God and His righteous ways. Pray for God's will to be accomplished through the current administration and the upcoming elections. John 7:38; John 17; 2 Chron. 7:14

To enrich your prayer life and learn how to strategically pray with power by using appropriate scriptures, we recommend the following sources by Apostle John Eckhardt: Prayers that Rout Demons, Prayers that Bring Healing, Prayers that Release Heaven on Earth and Prayers that Break Curses. To order any or all of these click here.