

Gospel
DNA

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to community group! We believe that people experience and grow in their faith when they get to spend time reflecting on God's Word, and also hearing from other Christians. That's what we're hoping for tonight. As we get started, here are some things happening in the broader life of the church:

- **Missional Motherhood | Saturday, September 21st , 9-11:30a**

Join moms with children of all ages (including expecting mothers) for breakfast and connections. During this event, we will be discussing the topic of hospitality, led by Jill Jackson. Come learn, engage with others and be encouraged! There is nothing to prepare or read prior.

If you need childcare, please RSVP by September 13th.

If you would like to sign up to serve or bring food to share, sign up during the next step of registration.

- **10 Year Celebration | October 4th, 6-8p**

This year, we celebrate 10 years of ministry at New City Presbyterian Church. Join us for an evening of dinner and stories at 20th Century Theater in Oakley to mark this milestone. Tickets are \$20/person and include dinner and two drink tickets. This event is for 12 years old and up. Childcare is *not* provided.

- **Back2Back Haiti | February 29th-March 7th**

We are taking a group to Haiti with Back 2 Back this winter. If you'd like to join in talk with Pastor Ryan.

Who is God?

John 17.1-6, 20-26

>> *Open your group with a prayer* >>

>>SAY>> *We're trying to get to know each other a bit. So share your **name, where you're from, and where you live now, and answer:***

If you got to do one other job/vocation than what you are doing currently (realistic or not), what would it be? Why?

STUDY/DISCUSSION

This fall we're doing a series together on the nature of the gospel. If the gospel is that God has come to save us ("Salvation belongs to the Lord!," Jonah 2.9), then the natural question to ask is, "Who is God?" We're going to talk about that tonight as we discuss John 17.

>> **READ** >> **John 17.1-6, 20-26**

1. What stood out to you as significant, encouraging, confusing or challenging in this passage?
2. v.1 - "*When Jesus had spoken these words...*" This is a reference to chapters 13-16, Jesus' farewell discourse with his disciples before his death. If you knew your time was coming to an end with some people, what would be most important to say? Why?
3. v.1-6 - What do we learn about the relationship between the Father and the Son in these verses? (Read John 15.26-27 and 16.12-15 to learn about how the Holy Spirit fits in to this)
4. J.I. Packer writes, "The historic [doctrine] of the Trinity... confronts us with perhaps the most difficult thought that the human mind has ever been asked to handle." Look up the following verses in Scripture and talk about what you learn about the nature of God: Deuteronomy 6.4; Isaiah 43:10, 44.6, 45.22; Ephesians 4.5; Mark 1.9-11; Matthew 28.18-20; 2 Corinthians 13.14; Genesis 1.1-2.
5. v.3 - Discuss Jesus' definition of eternal life. Why does he describe it this way? Is this something you can only experience after you die?
6. v.20-26 - What does this part of Jesus' prayer reveal about his desire for us?
7. On Sunday Josh emphasized 3 applications from this passage: a.) You were made for community, b.) You were made for mission, and c.) You are deeply loved. Which of these do you need to remember and work out the implications of this week?

PRAY

Take some time and pray together. This can be done together as a whole group, or in smaller groups.

As the year is just beginning you may want to think about how you'd like prayer to go in your groups and plan diligently to start in that way. That is, figure out how sharing and prayer will be a priority in your group. For example, you may set a timer on your phone during the sharing time so that you get to prayer rather than spend all of the time sharing.

Either take notes yourself or have someone else write down all the prayer requests so that you can share them with the group and so that you yourself can be praying for your group members.

Leaders' Notes

(from the Gospel Transformation Study Bible)

John 17:1–5 Jesus' appointed "hour" has finally arrived. Very soon he will travail in prayer over his impending cross; but now, he intercedes with joy over his beloved disciples. No earthly feasts can even faintly compare with the nourishment we are given in Jesus' "high priestly prayer."

Unlike Israel's high priest, Jesus didn't have to offer a sacrifice for his own sins as he came into the Father's presence. The final Day of Atonement involved this eschatological High Priest becoming the sacrifice for the sins of the people ([Heb. 7:27](#)). There is no greater love than this ([John 15:13](#); [Rom. 5:6–10](#)).

The joy set before Jesus, as he prepared to endure the cross ([Heb. 12:2](#)), included at least two things. Jesus longed to return to the Father, to enjoy the life he shared with him before the world was created. But Jesus also felt great joy in anticipation of redeeming and cherishing his international bride. He now delights in us and rejoices over us, as a bridegroom over his bride ([Isa. 62:5](#); [Zeph. 3:17](#)).

John 17:6–19 Having given himself for our sins once for all ([Heb. 7:27](#); [1 Pet. 3:18](#)), Jesus now prays for us without ceasing ([Rom. 8:34](#); [Heb. 7:25](#)). Because the disciples were given permission to eavesdrop on this prayer, we know what Jesus thinks of us and what he is now praying for us.

Jesus counts us a love gift to him from the Father ([John 17:6](#); see also v. [24](#)). He treasures and cherishes us as a bridegroom treasures his bride, for that is what we are ([Eph. 5:22–33](#)). Should anyone ask, "Who gives these sinners to this Savior?" the Father responds enthusiastically, "I do!" Election is the most wonderful prearranged marriage imaginable.

Because we are already beloved by Jesus, he prays for the increase of our joy—the same joy that fills his own heart. He also prays for our protection in the world—a battlefield that is also our mission field. Jesus doesn't pray that we won't suffer ([Phil. 1:29](#)) but that we will be kept from the Evil One, our defeated foe who seeks to sabotage our worship and work in the world.

Jesus also prays for our sanctification by the truth of the Father's words. The Father's words will always point us to Jesus—who is our "wisdom from God," our "righteousness and sanctification and redemption" ([1 Cor. 1:30](#)). The same grace that justifies us is the grace that sanctifies us. All saving benefits come from our union with Christ.

John 17:20–26 Jesus expands his prayer to include those who will—not *might*, but *will*—believe in him. The "Great Commission" isn't our job to get done, but God's promise to fulfill. We are privileged to live as characters in God's story of redemption and also as proclaimers of that story; but we must never forget, it is God's story.

Jesus prays for the unity, not the uniformity, of his believers. God is praised, and the world takes notice, when Christians demonstrate a Spirit-given unity—a unity we must be eager to maintain ([Eph. 4:1–3](#)). Our fallen instincts encourage us to build our identity on what distinguishes us even from other believers, but Jesus exposes the self-centeredness of such a mind-set. Our *union with Christ* brings a *unity in Christ* that transcends all secondary disagreements.