

Looking Backwards: from the cross to Jesus' prayer for you John 17.20-26

Focus: to align ourselves with Jesus' prayer and cross work to make us one

Here is a helpful article on our passage:

<https://bible.org/seriespage/high-priestly-prayer-jesus-part-iii-john-1720-26>

These resources can help address the question of what is worth dividing over:

<http://www.reclaimingthemind.org/blog/2009/12/essentials-and-non-essentials-how-to-choose-you-battles-carefully-chart-included/>

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/essentials-unity-non-essentials-liberty-all-things/>

2016 Annual Priority:

To establish a greater devotion to believing and being shaped by the three great loves embedded in our mission statement's goal of becoming a mature and ministering worshiper of God; love for God, love for the church, and love of neighbor.

Discussion:

- Read John 17.20-26. What effect does Jesus' example of praying for future generations of believers have on you? How can you follow His example in this?
- Make a list of the core things Jesus prays about in His prayer for the church. How can you build those into your own prayers for the church? (do you pray for our church?? Discuss how you can begin to do that faithfully!)
- Look closely at what Jesus prays about in verse 24. What does it mean to you that Jesus would include you in that prayer? What do you love about that prayer? What does it teach about His love for the church? How can you better align your life/heart with what He prayed for us (and you)?
- In verses 21-23, Jesus prays repeatedly that we would be one. What makes unity in the church so hard? What can you learn about how we can be one/what unity is fueled by from this verse?
- Are you in a situation where the pursuit of unity with another believer is difficult? How might this passage be applied to that and other relationships with believers at work/school/neighbors? Share takeaways and pray for Jesus' prayer to fulfilled beautifully at NW!

