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So we are continuing on with the final part of Jesus' high priestly prayer and we will be covering verses 11, 13, and 20-26. To quickly review the key passages are as follows.

***John 17:11***

Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, ***that they may be one even as We are.***

***John 17:20-23***

"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; 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. "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, ***just as We are one;*** 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.

This issue of "oneness" is a critical part of Jesus prayer so it has huge import in our lives and we cannot blow over it. All His prayers for us to be in unity with each other are conditioned upon His oneness and unity with His Father and the entirety of the Godhead. So we studied that their oneness has 3 main components.

1. They have different roles and functions; the Father's role is different from the Son and the Holy Spirit.
2. They work cooperatively toward the same unified purposes: to glorify one another.
3. They employ the same immutable attributes in carrying out this work; for example, all that they do is: holy, righteous, true, faithful, is full of wisdom, and love.

So last week we studied the first point and the fact that we all have different roles and functions. Each of you has been placed in this body and God has gifted each of you uniquely so you can fulfill your role so that this body can be healthy and strong and not sick. In the same way we at Pathway Fellowship have a role to fulfill in the larger body of Christ so that the larger body is also healthy and not sick.

Number 2, we are to work cooperatively together toward the same unified purposes: to glorify one another. We are going to continue with this thought before we move on to point 3. Like the Son who always lived to glorify the Father and the Father who greatly exalted the Son, we are to always live intent on this one purpose, to bring glory to one another.

But it is not just a matter of being obedient to the command of God. In fact, if you look at this—our relationship with each other and our need to live in unity—as a command, your attempts to comply will almost certainly fail. This is a relational matter between you and your Father.

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I want you to hold on to the following perspective. When you choose to honor someone, prefer someone, let them have glory, when you lift them up and encourage them; that you are doing unto the Father. You are bringing glory and honor to the Father. This is all about Him—you and Him. Jesus lived to always give glory to the Father and everything He did pointed to the Father's glory; and that is the same with you as you live and walk in alignment with God's will in this area of our relationships.

This is about you and the Father. And the person you choose to honor is kind of like a bridge that you walk over that kind of completes the current ongoing fellowship that you have with the Father. So if you can truly understand this command to honor, serve and prefer others, it won't be a heavy burden or act of personal sacrifice. No; it will be a part of your living and wonderful worship of your Dad—your Dad who loves you so much. You will be able to see right through that person because you will see your Dad and want to honor Him and love Him.

We see this played out in the parable that Jesus gave in **Matthew 28:34-40**. He spoke of those who fed others when they were hungry, clothed others when they were naked, and visited others who were in prison and caged in. He said: "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me."

Think about it. Serving, honoring and giving preference to another, in addition to the practical meaning, is about feeding those who are spiritually starving, clothing those who have yet learned how to be clothed in the armor of God, and setting free those who are imprisoned in their cages of wrong belief and unbelief. And to the extent that you care for one precious child of God in this way you are

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honoring and giving glory to the Father. You should also look up **Matthew 10:42** for it also speaks to this issue.

Here is another point; I also want you to realize this. The greatest glory you can give to another, the greatest way you can honor and give preference to another, and the greatest act of Agape love is to point a person to Jesus—to lead them closer to Jesus. You see, Agape love is not about what we want or how we think we want it. Agape love is about the wisdom of God which leads us first and foremost in what another person needs and not necessarily what they want.

Leading a person closer to Jesus should be our first aim in every relationship. This means that honoring a person and considering them first means so much more than just some form of self-denial, which is where we usually tend to limit our understanding of the verses in **Philippians 2** and so many of the other verses that command us to love or serve others. Again, Agape love is about having the wisdom of God for another person's life.

In fact, sometimes being devoted to someone, giving preference to someone, and loving someone in truth, requires just the opposite in terms of behavior. Sometimes it means that you become a wall in another person's life and absolutely refuse to let them walk in their flesh (*Old Sinful Nature*). Sometimes it means that you absolutely refuse to enable their flesh in any way shape or form. Sometimes it means that you must fundamentally alter the nature of your relationship to eliminate any sick co-dependent or other forms of manipulative behavior.

Sometimes it means that you might even have to withdraw and separate for a time. Sometimes it means that your words which are spoken in love must cut very

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deep so that the truth comes to light and all the layers of deception and delusion are exposed. Sometimes it means that all you can do is pray and pray and pray for a person. And, by the way, it always means that you don't allow any part of your relationship to be built on fear, intimidation, threat, coercion or manipulation.

Do you now understand why I said that we are desperately in need of the wisdom of God? We absolutely need the mind of Christ for it is His wisdom that will always lead us in the right course of action (***Proverbs 2:1-11***). With His wisdom we will always know the right face of love that is needed at the moment so we won't be reacting based on what we think is happening in the relationship but we are responding based on the wisdom of God as He leads us.

Working together to love and honor each other, however, becomes so much easier when we are all focused on the same goal—when we are of one mind. If we can all agree that our highest priority is learning how to be loved by Jesus and learning to love Jesus, then we are going to have a much easier time helping each other.

If we are of one mind we will be able to openly share what we are learning, what Jesus is doing in our lives, and we will be open to correction, instruction, guidance, direction, etc., because our ego and our pride won't control our lives; rather, our ego and pride will be submitted to our desire to have Jesus reign in our lives.

Last week we read a passage in ***Matthew 5*** where Jesus said we are to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. This is a huge call on our lives. That statement applies to both our relationships with each other and our relationships with God. That is why we are so dependent upon Him because the standard is

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perfection. That is why we need His life in ours because He is the only one who is perfect. Therefore, if we are to be “one” with Him and “one” with each other then we need to be like Him. However, there is only one way to be perfect and that leads us to our 3rd point.

3. We are to employ the same immutable attributes in carrying out this work; for example, all that they do is: holy, righteous, true, faithful, is full of wisdom, and His love.

Do not be deceived! Our **true fellowship** (or our ability to be “one”) is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (**1 John 1:3**)! Sometimes we think it is about the group, about the gathering, about the family that God created. No; those are the blessings, but that is not the source of our true fellowship. Our fellowship and our unity come from our oneness with the Father and with Jesus Christ.

Our fellowship is not based on the fact that we are Christians but only on our ability to share Jesus in us with Jesus in another. This is why ecumenical movements cheering us on to “oneness” tend to dissipate with little to no lasting impact on the overall body of Christ. This is also why that mindset that as Christians we just need to love each other and get along will also always fail. I understand that this mindset is well intentioned and good hearted, but practically it is impotent and therefore can only go as far as a person’s religious *Old Sinful Nature* can take them—which history proves is not very far.

Therefore, for us to employ the immutable attributes of God in 1) functioning together according to God’s design and 2) giving glory to one another, we must,

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must, must, must, live from our **New Creation** ! There are no ifs, ands, or buts. There is no righteousness apart from Christ's righteousness. There is no holiness apart from His holiness. There is no truth apart from the truth. In fact, it is only when we live from our **New Creation** that we even have access to God's Agape love—which is at the core of our ability to live in unity.

And, as we have studied, Agape is God's love; it is not man's love. It is divine and can only be accessed through the divine—through God living in you.

Now just to make it clear, if you have been born again, if you have asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior and to forgive you of all your sins, then you have been given a new nature, which I like refer to as the **New Creation** . The **New Creation** is the containment of all those immutable attributes of God.

#### ***Ephesians 4:21-24***

If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

(See also **Romans 6:4, Colossians 3:10, Galatians 6:5, Romans 8:29**).

The **New Creation** is also the very home or dwelling place of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

***John 14:23-24***

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.

***John 14:16-17***

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

This is the miracle of what it means to be a believer in Jesus Christ. It is not about religion and it is not about some brand of "faith." It is about the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit taking up residence in your ***New Creation***. This is the reason why we can ask for anything which is in alignment with the will of God and Jesus says that He will do it. Yes, Jesus will be the one living in you who will literally do the work; and the work of the Son always brings glory to the Father (***1 John 5:14-15; John 14:11-14***).

True Christianity is all about His life in yours. Therefore, if there is any hope at all for the body of Christ to access the immutable attributes of God and experience "oneness" we will have to learn: 1) how to live from the ***New Creation***, and 2) understand the dire consequences of not living from the ***New Creation***.



In a little bit we are going to turn to **1 John** and focus on the consequences of not living from the **New Creation**. This little book makes it so clear that when we do not live from our **New Creation** we live in sin, dwell in darkness, are blind to God, and are friends with the Devil. These are some pretty intense consequences that we often do not fully comprehend because there is usually not an immediate “cause/effect” experience in terms of our immediate circumstances. But seen or unseen, the consequences are real and they are dire.

However, before we turn to **1 John**, I want us to focus on what it means to live from the **New Creation**. Therefore, I must remind you of a few foundational truths which I know we “know” but I am afraid we have not truly believed.

**Hebrews 11:6**

Without faith it is impossible to please God.

**Romans 14:23**

...whatever is not from faith is sin.

**Romans 8:5-8**

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's

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why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

Each of these passages paints a very black and white picture with no middle ground. However, just because it is black and white does not mean it is bleak. In fact, just the contrary; it is absolutely glorious. It radically emphasizes **John 15:5**, when Jesus said: “for apart from me you can do nothing.”

You see, by definition, all that we are, all that does not derive from the divine, is corrupt and sinful: every thought, every motive, and every deed. In fact, our entire existence apart from God is sin. When you can breathe deep and accept this truth, you will begin to understand why obsessing on sinful behavior has never alleviated your problem of sin. Behavior is merely the fruit; the true problem is what we are! It is for this very reason that all had to be new—it is why Jesus had to give us a new nature (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

I think this might be one of the hardest truths for believers to accept. It seems that most people are on this futile quest to be good Christians and have never learned that only God is good.

Please don't be dismayed, this is not a truth of which we need to be afraid. It does not matter in the slightest if every part of our life that has not derived from Christ Himself is sin. There is absolutely no reason for distress or concern; in fact, just the opposite, it is a cause for rejoicing. According to **Romans 8:1** there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We have been completely reconciled to God and there is no hostility between us—just peace (**Romans 5:1**). We are forgiven—it is our state of perpetual existence (**1 John 1:9**). He has

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thrown our sin away as far as the East is from the West; it is nowhere to be found (*Psalm 103*).

Therefore, with this truth girding our loins, we should be able to deal with the issue that everything in our lives that has not derived from the divine is sin without getting all messed up and taking it personally. It's not personal; it is just a statement of fact and it is true whether you want to believe it or not. So get used to it and realize that this is why Jesus had to die. If you had any capability on your own to live righteous or be righteous then He would not have had to die. You don't so He did! So get out of the way and stop trying so hard to be a "good" Christian and let Christ live in and through you.

You might be thinking that this sounds good, but you still have no idea how to live from the *New Creation*. Well, it all hinges on faith. Faith is the key to our living from the *New Creation*; and I am talking "practical" faith and not some religious ideal of faith (*James 2:20*). We must be willing to bet our lives on all that God has said and let His Word be the absolute authority over our lives!

For example, if we believe God will honor us, we are free, by faith, to honor, serve and prefer another—we have nothing to lose. If we believe that He will be our Protector and our Defender, then we are free, by faith, to not take any form of revenge against those who hurt us; in fact, we can even bless them knowing that God is responsible for meting out His justice in our lives. If we believe that we can know the will of God for our lives, we will seek and seek and seek until He opens up His wisdom to our lives. We also will refuse to do anything in which we do not have His confidence or His peace that it is His will. If we believe that He is the Gatekeeper and the Good Shepherd, then we will rest knowing that nothing

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happens to us that He does not allow and, if He allows it, then somehow, someway, it is an expression of His great love for us and is intended for our good—to conform us into the image of the Son (***Romans 8:29-30***).

This is how we live by faith—trusting Jesus is our “I Am;” trusting that He will be for us everything that He said He would be and betting our “practical” life on that truth. However, every time we choose not to trust Jesus to be our “I Am” and instead trust ourselves or anything else, we choose to sin. Every time we value the wisdom of the world over the wisdom of God, we choose to sin. Every time we let our emotions dictate how we behave versus what we know to be true about God’s love for us, we choose to sin. Do you understand what I mean by “practical” faith?

Now, as each of us chooses to live from our ***New Creation*** (a.k.a. chooses to live by faith), we will have all the immutable attributes of God available to us—the attributes which will enable us to live in “oneness.” We will have His holiness, His faithfulness, His mercy, His compassion, His righteousness, His wisdom, and His love—it all comes with His presence in our lives.

Now, let’s turn to ***1 John***. We need to discuss the dire consequences of choosing to live according to the voice and authority of our *Old Sinful Nature*. I hope to fully convince you that this issue of living either from our ***New Creation*** (by faith) or from our *Old Sinful Nature* (no matter how religious it may be) is entirely a black and white issue with no middle ground. What we are going to discover is that if we are not, at this moment, living from our ***New Creation*** we are, at this moment, in sin living from our *Old Sinful Nature*, and are by definition enemies of God, friends with the Devil, and wholly incapable of operating with

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the immutable attributes of God's nature. This is how desperate our condition really is and this truth underscores why achieving "oneness" has been for the most part little more than good sounding religious rhetoric.

I am afraid that we have all become much too comfortable with our Christian lives and have come to live as if there is this nice big cushy safe middle ground that is ok as long as we are not doing anything too bad or too sinful in the eyes of others. It does not seem to matter all that much that at the root of our thoughts, choices, and relationships lays fear and not faith. **1 John** will convince us that our nice, safe, comfy middle ground is really the kingdom of our *Old Sinful Nature* and the province of the devil.

I am going to include with the text of **1 John** some expanded explanations and I am also going to explain the use of various Greek tenses to give you a full understanding of the incredible implications of this text.

**1 John 1:5-7.** God Is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we (*present and actively*) have fellowship with Him and yet (*present and actively*) walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice (*literally, present and actively do*) the truth; but if we (*present and actively*) walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have (*present and active*) fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son (*present and actively*) cleanses us from all sin.

This means if we're not currently living in His light (with no darkness), we don't have fellowship; rather we are estranged from both our fellowship with God and our fellowship with each other and have deceived ourselves to believe that we are good Christians because we do good Christian things—but there is no "oneness" and we currently dwell in darkness.

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**1 John 3:4-5.** Everyone who practices sin (*presently and actively*) also practices lawlessness (*presently and actively*); and sin is lawlessness. You know that He appeared in order to take away sins (*once and for all*); and in Him there is no sin.

We have not only been forgiven of sin but its power to rule over our lives has been taken away (**Romans 6:6-7**) and since there is no sin in Him then when we live from our **New Creation** (rather as He lives from our **New Creation**) then we do not currently sin.

**1 John 3:6.** No one who (*presently and actively*) abides in Him sins; no one who (*presently and actively*) sins has seen Him (*literally, is not presently seeing Him but is blind*) or knows Him (*literally, does not presently know Him*).

Notice that each verb tense is about the real time present and active choice a person makes and is not dealing with a permanent condition. When you sin, you currently do not trust yourself to Jesus; rather, you currently abide in darkness and therefore cannot even see Him. This is not your permanent condition, but your present condition when you choose to sin. Knowing this is critical to getting an accurate understanding of the point John is making. Just to contrast, when John says that Jesus forgives us from our sin and cleanse us from every wrong (**1 John 1:9**) he uses a tense that means it is finished. We have been forgiven. It is not something that is conditional upon anything in the future. Once we are forgiven we are always forgiven.

**1 John 3:7-8.** Little children, make sure no one (*presently and actively*) deceives you; the one who (*presently and actively*) practices righteousness is (*presently and actively*) righteous, just as He is righteous [they live from their new nature which embodies the immutable attributes of God, including righteousness]; the one who (*presently*

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*and actively*) practices sin is (*presently and actively*) of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

Don't let this reference to the devil freak you out. Remember, **Romans 8:7** says that our *Old Sinful Nature* is always hostile to God, always was and will always be—so again, please don't take it personal, it's just a statement of fact. That's why James told us that friendship with the world makes us enemies of God and if our aim is to enjoy this world, we cannot be a friend of God (**James 4:4**).

As uncomfortable and unconventional as it may be, it is imperative that you accept this truth. A believer who does not live from the **New Creation** can be a tool of the devil, for the interests of their *Old Sinful Nature* and the devil are aligned. Even Peter was a tool for the devil. One day Peter tried to persuade Jesus not to go to Jerusalem and die, and Jesus said: "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's" (**Matthew 16:23**). I know that none of us wants to be in alliance with the devil; that is why we must be willing to bet our lives on all that God says because whatever is not of faith is sin and opens the door for the enemy to wreak havoc in our lives. We must **always** live from the **New Creation** otherwise we are vulnerable to being tools of the enemy.

And now we get to the clincher. **1 John 3:9**. No one who is born of God (*perfect passive tense*) practices sin (*literally, does not presently and actively sin*), because His seed (*presently and actively*) abides in him; and he cannot sin (*present passive tense*), because he is (*perfect passive tense*) born of God.

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Both uses of “born of God” are in the perfect passive tense. The perfect tense means that it is our permanent unchanging condition. We are in the family; we are God’s children and nothing can or will change that truth. The passive tense means that God did it and we were just passive recipients of His undeserved grace. But I want you to notice that it says that the one who is born of God cannot sin. This might be a bit confusing since obviously we all sin and John himself says in **1:8** that anyone who says he does not sin is fooling himself and refuses to accept the truth. No, John is not contradicting himself. The key to understanding this phrase comes in knowing that “cannot sin” is in the *present passive* tense.

This means that your *Old Sinful Nature* cannot currently force you to sin. Before you were adopted into the family of God, you were a slave to its control and you had no choice but to sin. It was your nature and your entire existence was sin. But now you have a new nature and the power of your *Old Sinful Nature* has been permanently broken. Now, sin is something you volitionally choose—something you give yourself over to; hence, the continual use of the *present active* tense in the references to sin. This is what the entire 6<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Romans is about.

**1 John 3:10.** By this the children of God (*those presently and actively living as children of God*) and the children of the devil (*those presently and actively living as children of the devil*) are obvious: anyone who does not (*presently and actively*) practice righteousness is (*presently and actively*) not of God, nor the one who does not (*presently and actively*) love his brother.

We must be careful to not twist this and get confused. John is not saying the person who does not practice righteousness or agape love his brother does not literally belong to God; He is saying that the person who chooses sin is not, at this



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current moment in time, presently and actively abiding with God, i.e., they are living from their *Old Sinful Nature* who is an enemy of God and is beholden to the devil. I can say this with confidence because scripture does not contradict itself. John made it clear in **3:9** above that notwithstanding the fact that we sin, we “are” children of God and because he used the perfect tense we know that it is our permanent condition. Nothing will ever change that, not even our sin. The only thing that is impacted by our sin is our present state of fellowship with God.

I know that going through all these verb tenses might have been a bit too much but I felt it was important that we truly understand the scriptures on this matter. Either you are, or you are not, at any moment in time, living from your **New Creation**. And if you are, you are righteous and you will do righteousness and with His nature you will love your brothers and sisters in Christ thereby fulfilling the conditions for us to live as “one” and be continually perfected in unity. If not, then you are in sin living from your *Old Sinful Nature* with no fellowship with God and all your attempts toward unity and “oneness” will fail, for whatever is not of faith is sin. In fact, during such time there is a good chance that you might even be a tool for the enemy, for your *Old Sinful Nature* is literally of the devil. This is how desperate we truly are for the new life which Jesus gives us!

Wow, this passage in **1 John** is so intense and it makes it clear beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is no middle ground. With each choice you make, you are either in fellowship with God or in fellowship with the devil. This is why we must no longer be comfortable thinking we are ok and are “good” Christians just because we may not be doing anything that we consider to be too bad. We must trust ourselves to Him. He has given us every reason to trust Him; after all, He has

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removed our sin and poured out His mercy on our lives. He has made us permanent members of His family. It's time we reciprocate; it's time we become that living sacrifice!

It also interesting how this passage in **1 John** demonstrates the limitations of the English language in terms of precision of expression verses the Greek language. We have a hard time capturing all those tenses in the English language. But even more revealing is the light it shines on the bias of those who translate some of the versions we use. It is obvious with the translators' word choice that many of them do not really grasp the way of the **New Creation** and tend to treat **1 John** as if it makes a contrast between believers and unbelievers versus believers living from either their **New Creation** or their *Old Sinful Nature*.

This is why I believe the translators of the ESV and the NASB include the word "practice" before the present active use of the word "sin" in order to imply a difference. It is interesting, however, that the King James and New Living Translations actually just translate it as "he who sins" and do not try and make a distinction between a person who practices sin and a person who just sins.

### **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."

Backing up to **verse 13**, it should now be clear how we can experience Jesus' joy. Jesus spoke these things to the disciples because He wanted us to know the

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secret to joy. Notice that it is His joy and is not something amorphous that we can only hope to achieve. It's His so it comes with Him. The more of Him we have—the more we let the **New Creation** dominate our lives—the more of His joy we will experience. The verb “made full” is in the **perfect** tense so Jesus is saying that His joy does not fade but it is a permanent experience for those who presently and actively know and see 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.

Again the key is Jesus in us (“I in them”). This passage tells us that if we allow Jesus to (presently and actively) live in us through our **New Creation**, our families, our friends, our co-workers will all know that Jesus was sent by God and that we are loved by the Father, for when people meet us they will have an unmistakable encounter with Jesus Himself. When we live from the **New Creation**, utilizing the immutable attributes of God, we live counter cultural to all that people tend to expect from someone who belongs to this world. Unity and peace are just a pipe dream for those in the world. But for us, it can and should be our reality. Thus, when we dwell in unity it will become very apparent to all that we do not belong to this world. People will know that we serve a different master and that something is radically different about our lives. This is a miracle that can only be explained by God's supernatural invasion of His love in our lives. Our unity proves that Jesus came from God and now lives on in and through His children!

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I actually believe that many people in the world want to believe in God, but they are rarely given the evidence that He exists or that He is involved in the affairs of this world, much less truly loves anyone. But imagine what would happen if those in the body of Christ started to bet their lives on the truth of the Word of God and actually live as if they “are” children of God. I guarantee you we would see an unbelievable revival. The collective light that would shine from our lives would be overwhelming. If you have unbelieving family members and you desire them to be saved, give them the proof that Jesus lives.

***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.

I am not totally sure about the translation “I desire” for the literal Greek is “I will.” The New American, the NLT and the ESV translate it “I desire” but the King James translates it as “I will.” But either way it’s an awesome declaration. On the one hand, Jesus desires us to be with Him and to share in all that is His (***John 17:22; Romans 8:17***). He wants us to behold Him as He really is and know Him as completely as we are known (***1 Corinthians 13:12***).

The mere fact that He has this much desire for us is so beautiful and comforting. His love for us is truly beyond our understanding. On the other hand, it is Jesus “will” that we will be with Him and behold His glory; thus, we can have absolute assurance that it is going to happen and we will be where He is and

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always will be (**John 14:3**). So strap on your helmet of salvation and rest knowing that your salvation is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away and is reserved in heaven for you (**Ephesians 6:17; 1 Peter 1:3-5**)!

### **John 17:25-26**

"O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; 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."

Previously in **verse 11** Jesus prayed, "Holy Father keep them in Your name" as Jesus made the point that through the **New Creation** we will live holy as He is holy—we will be set apart unto Him and we will be pure as He is pure. Now He prays, "O righteous Father" and again calls on one of the immutable attributes of the Godhead. I believe Jesus makes this appeal for 2 purposes. First, because He is saying that the Father is righteous in determining those who have known Him (the disciples and all true believers) and those who have not know Him (those who love the world). His judgments are just and true. This statement completes the contrasts that have run all through this book. Those who love the world love the darkness so they don't see the light but run from it (**John 3:19**); whereas, we see the light and are drawn to it (**John 3:21**). Similarly, those who belong to the world cannot hear His voice (**John 8:43-47**); but we not only hear His voice, we follow (**John 10:27**).

Then, as if to put an exclamation mark on this point, one day **every** knee will bow and **every** tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord—this includes everyone who will be facing eternal judgment. In this declaration they will all be confirming that Jesus is God and is therefore righteous in all that He has determined.

Secondly, I believe Jesus calls on this attribute to assure us that because the Father is righteous He will, by nature, do everything that He said and be to us everything that He has promised to be. For example, as the Father loves the Son so we are loved—this is a truth that we can bet on, and because He is righteous this truth is backed by the power and authority of His name.

Jesus also assures us that He will continue to make the Father's name know to us. This is His promise to continue to reveal to us all the areas where the Father is not our "I Am" and give us the reasons why we can trust ourselves to Him and abide in Him so that He (Jesus) can abide in us.

In closing, I want you to consider the great love that the Father has for you. You have been chosen from amongst the billions to be drenched in His love and this is despite the fact that your entire existence was sin and you lived in constant hostility toward Him. His love is so great, so wide, so deep, so intense and so powerful that you can never escape it. Therefore, I suggest that you choose to feast upon it and let it be your covering. Let it be your boat in the storm, your warm blanket in the cold, your spring of cold water in the desert, your rock of security in the shifting sand of your mind, your strength when you are weak, and your confidence in this life that you must live in the flesh. Let His perfect love cast out all your fear and all the reasons why you have not trusted Him completely. His love is sure and will always keep you safe.

And if you are not fully convinced of His love for you, the next few chapters of John will show you how far He will go to demonstrate that He really does love you for real.

Let's Pray