

Read: John 17:20-26

I'm Praying for You

John 17:20-21

[Jesus said], "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

"I'm praying for you!" Has anyone ever said that to you? Have you said it to someone? What a loving and kind thing it is when we offer to pray for someone and then we go to God in our prayers. You might ask God to help someone get better when they're sick. You may pray for God to calm a friend's fears or worries. You may say a prayer of thanks when something really great happens to someone in your family or to a friend. God tells us we can pray to him at anytime and anywhere.

Did you know that Jesus prayed for you? When you read today's words from the book of John, you hear Jesus praying for his disciples, but also for you! You are one of those who believe in him though hearing about God's message in the Bible. Jesus also prays for anyone else who comes to faith in him. In his prayer, Jesus asks "that all of them may be one." Another word for that is *unity*. Jesus wants all of us (including you and me) to have unity. What does that mean? He wants us to have the strong bond that comes from being one with God and with each other. He wants us all to work together to share God's Word. He wants us to all share the same message—that Jesus is the Savior and that because of him, we have forgiveness and the gift of heaven.

Do you know why unity is so important? Imagine you are in a canoe with someone. One is facing the front and one is facing the back and you are both using the oars to move the boat. However, because of how you're sitting, you're rowing in opposite directions. That won't work! It's the same with us and all believers. Satan wants us to quarrel and disagree with each other because then we can't work well in telling others about God. However, if we work together, share the same message, be in the Word together, and get along well, there is so much that can be done to spread God's Word. Jesus is praying for that kind of unity with each other and with him.

"I'm praying for you." Let's do that for each other. Let's pray for each other and ask God, just like Jesus did, that he blesses our unity with him and with each other so that many others can see Jesus through us.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Jesus prayed for you, and we can pray for others. Sometimes we might think that praying is something grownups do for us, but God loves to hear everyone pray. Think of someone you would like to pray for.
- Take a moment and say out loud a little prayer for that person.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Unity was at the heart of Jesus' prayer in our reading today. He prays that "all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." What does it mean that he wants all believers to be one?
- Name at least one way you can help keep unity in your home.

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Satan is so good at trying to turn believers away from God. Some ways are very sneaky, and some are obvious. Think of at least one sneaky and one obvious way that he might do so.
- Name two ways that we can stay strong and encourage others to be strong in faith so that God's message of grace can be shared with as many as possible?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Father, thank you for praying for your disciples and for us. Help us to keep our focus on the truths in your Word and to encourage each other in faith in you. In your name, Amen.