

**John 17:20-26 (NIV)**

- <sup>20</sup>“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,
- <sup>21</sup>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.
- <sup>22</sup>I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:
- <sup>23</sup>I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.
- <sup>24</sup>“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- <sup>25</sup>“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me.
- <sup>26</sup>I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

43-17-04-The Church’s Trinitarian Witness  
 faith, eternal life, Trinity, love, glory, indwelling, evangelism  
 John 17:20-26

The Church was born to reflect God’s Triune nature to the world.

**INTRODUCTION:** (text as Scripture reading)

–John 1 sows seeds that bear fruit in later chapters. *New birth* is one of them— Jn 1:12-13. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but **born of God**. Soon we learn how new birth brings us: entry into “the kingdom of God”; access to “the water of life”; guidance by “the good shepherd”; **and relationally knowing** God and Christ, which Jesus defines as “eternal life” in His prayer in John 17.  
 –His prayer also describes us as a group: HOM.idea. As a people “born of God,” we’re to broadcast God’s divine nature. If we obediently live out our corporate life in Christ, the lost will see the kind of life they’ve been missing. Some won’t respond, but others will, wanting to have that kind of life too. *So, what must they see? They need to see...*

- I. The Testimony of Divine Unity— v. 20-21**, “*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.*”
- A. *This prayer is amazing!* Jesus prays for the character of Christian unity to be *Trinitarian* in nature! (*Even more amazing... this unity comes by our being immersed into the Oneness of the Godhead.*)
1. *Unity isn’t uniformity.* (God is 3 different Persons in such *infinite Union* that *They* can be addressed only in the singular: “*He*.”)
  2. We’re also uniquely *different* persons, but by immersion into Trinitarian unity we become one Church, one Body, one Bride!
- B. We believe in “*the holy catholic Church*” because Christ’s Bride is one *universal* Body. (The “wood, hay and stubble” of divisions among Christians will be burned up at Heaven’s gates, because they’re hellish deceptions—lies to keep us from *pulling ourselves together* into *Trinitarian unity*, which is the Church’s spiritual birthright!)

**TRANS:** The Church was born to reflect God’s Triune nature to the world. People must see this testimony of divine unity as well as...

**II. The Testimony of Divine Glory**– v.22, *I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one:*

- A. Humans, made in God's image, no longer display His glory– Rom 3:23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
1. People feel this *shortfall* deep in their hearts. (They feel *empty* inside from the absence of “the glory” they were meant to reflect.)
  2. Success in *winning recognition* or *gaining worldly glory* leaves them coming up short, still knowing they're missing something.
- B. Jesus gave us His “glory” corporately, to manifest Trinitarian unity (“*that they may be one as we are one*”– God’s “glory” is a shared “glory” )
1. It’s a *received “glory.”* [We sing: “Heaven came down and glory filled my soul!” **But** worldly *self-glory* misses the mark, falls far short of God's glory.]
  2. Introducing Jesus, John 1:14 said, “We have seen his **glory**, the **glory** of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (This shared Trinitarian “glory” is now entrusted to the Church, and our job is to reflect it corporately– Eph 3:21, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.)

**TRANS:** The Church is to reflect this Triune glory to a world that’s dying from the vain, empty results of self-glory. The world also needs...

**III. The Testimony of Divine Love**– v.23, *I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.* [His love for us is Trinitarian love.]

- A. [1965: “What the world needs now is love, sweet love.”; 1995: “Lookin’ for love in all the wrong places.” We miss finding ultimate love until we meet the God of love who loves us in spite of our sins – Rom 5:8, But God demonstrates **his own love for us** in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.]
- B. People need to see this Trinitarian love embodied in the Church:
1. The Church already has it– Rom 5:5, God has poured out **his love into our hearts** by the Holy Spirit. (*Trinitarian love* is a “poured out” love!)
  2. The world needs to see God’s love in John 3:16 “poured out” by our love in 1 John 3:16. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. [In 1966, Peter Scholtes wrote a song, “We Are One in the Spirit,” but often it takes its title from the chorus: “They’ll know we are Christians by our love.”]

**TRANS:** “God is love.” **The Church was born to reflect God’s Triune nature of love to the world.** And we can do it, because we have...

**IV. The Testimony of Divine Indwelling**– v.25-26, “Righteous Father,... I have made you known to them...in order that **the love you have for me** may be **in them** and that **I myself** may be **in them.**”

- A. Indwelling is Trinitarian intimacy– John 14:11a, “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” (Jesus has shared that intimacy with us as a group: We are in Christ, and Christ is in us.)
- B. People must see to believe that personal intimacy with God is real, so He put within us, as one Body, not only His love but Himself.
- C. Each believer *is* “a temple,” but for *our Trinitarian testimony* to the world, we must see ourselves as one Body where God dwells– 1 Cor 3:16. Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? (The Spirit brings in the rest of the Trinity– John 14:23, Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.)

#### CONCLUSION:

*–Do we love Him and obey His teaching: “love one another, as I have loved you”?* **Do we realize the Church was born to reflect God’s Triune nature to this world?** *Do we join Jesus, asking for the Trinity’s unity, glory, love and indwelling presence to be seen in us as one Body, one Church, one Bride?* If so, let’s join Him in that prayer right now...