

# All In Youth Conference Special

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Preacher: Steven McDougald

[ 0 : 00 ] Jesus is praying. Does that not strike you as strange that God is praying to God?

I think as we even ponder that in our mind at all, we realize that we've come up to the border of language, to the limit of theology.

We're pushing boundaries we cannot pass. We're at the garden and there's still a cherubim blocking our way, but through the door we can hear this prayer, get a glimpse of God, oneness, love, glory, and all of these prayers are oozing together to a greatness so heavy, so wonderful, so much I can't preach it.

And I know I can't preach it. So I pray that the Father will help me. I pray that my words would be his words, and that what you hear tonight would be his heart, that your heart would be his heart, to be one with him.

We all would be one, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Amen. Thank you for joining tonight.

[ 1 : 26 ] I'm so glad you can make it. I'm so glad that we have the kids here, we've got parents here, we've got every, I don't want to say everybody else, but thank you for being here.

My name is Stephen McDougald. I'm the New Youth Minister, and I am here by God's grace and by a lot of your prayers. Thank you for your prayers that brought us here. It's been a long journey to get here.

It's been hard. But thank you. Thank you for joining tonight. It's the third part of our sermon series, so you're just catching the tail end if this is the first one.

We've been tracking through John, all of John 13 to 17, and we're at the very end here, the last part of John 17. And our theme verse is John 13, 34, 35.

It says this, A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

[ 2 : 26 ] For by this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. And on Friday night, we looked at it, and we said, well, what does that mean?

To love one another doesn't mean to love however I want to. It means that I have to love just as Jesus has loved me. So we asked, how has Jesus loved me? And we looked at the time that he washed his disciples' feet, and we looked at the cross.

We said, we must let Jesus love us first. I can't love you if I don't let Jesus love me first. And then on Saturday, we heard Jesus say, love one another, love one another.

And we said, how can we do that? And Jesus says, abide in me. As you abide in me, you will bear the fruit of love. We don't find love in ourselves. We get it through God, and we bring it to the world. And then tonight, the final part of John 13, 34, 35. By this, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. This is the so what.

[ 3 : 30 ] So what we love one another. And Jesus says, that's how the world will know. And so he prays that here at the end of John 17. The so what. That we may love. That we may be one with one another.

And so the sermon's going to be a little weird because I'm preaching a prayer. And so I'm going to kind of go in and out of prayer a little bit. And I pray that you will track with me and feel free to just pray if you feel led to.

So, let us hear again the words of Jesus. I do not ask for these only but also for those who will believe in me through their word.

So Jesus has prayed for himself in the beginning of John 17. He's now, he's prayed for his disciples and now he turns and he prays for you. He prays for me.

He prays for every single one of us who believe in him through the apostles. He trusted Peter. He trusted James. He trusted John.

[ 4 : 31 ] And he trusted the Holy Spirit to bring the word to the world. And you and me in this moment are fulfilling that prayer. We are here through their word and through the Holy Spirit.

Amen, right? Thank God. And that's the amazing thing about this prayer. It was always Jesus' plan to leave one holy, Catholic, an apostolic church full of his spirit.

That was always his plan. And that's what we're doing here tonight. In the hearing of the word, this is an answered prayer. This is an end in itself and that is beautiful.

So thank you, Jesus, for your prayer. We are glad that we can answer that today by being here, even on Zoom. Just look through the boxes. See people. That is Jesus' prayer in action.

And then he continues. He says, that they may all be one. Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they may be in us. And so now, it can kind of feel like a word soup, but it's the Trinity.

[ 5 : 41 ] Jesus is inviting us into a Trinitarian oneness. That just as he is in the Father, that we are in him and the Father is in us and the Holy Spirit is bringing us together, Father, that's what he's praying for.

That we may be one with God. That is what he's praying for.

And we may be one with God. Through him. We may be one with one another through him.

Through his work. So that the world may believe that you sent me, he says.

Or to put it a different way, using John 13, 34, 35. By this oneness, by this love, all people will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another.

So Jesus makes it very clear. And kids, I want you to know this. And each one of us should know this. The world will not know Jesus through our vision statement, through our excellence, through our programs, through good sermons, through our youth ministry, through youth ministers, through the art, through beautiful buildings, our theology, our large filled bookcases of good books.

[ 7 : 02 ] No, he says, the world will know me as you are one in me. The world will know me as you are one in me.

That is how we bring Jesus to the world. That is what Jesus is praying for. The world will believe that the Father has sent me as you are one in me.

In a Trinitarian oneness. That I am in Jesus and Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in me and the Holy Spirit is bringing us together. That's what he's praying for. That's what he wants.

That's what we should pray for. Father, make us one. We desire to be one with you. We desire to love you as you have loved us. We desire to love one another as you have loved each one of us. Help us, Father, where we fall short. We're so focused on ourselves. Help us to love you. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray.

[ 8 : 06 ] Amen. You know the silly thing, at least for me. Maybe I'm the only one who has this problem, so I work in the church.

But I always try to think about the meta problem, right? How can we bring the Catholics together and the Anglicans and the Protestants and the Charismatics and how can we all be one? How can we bring the church back to that apostolic and Acts church?

That's not what Jesus is praying for here. He's saying, can you be one with your wife? Can you love her like I love her?

Can you be one with your kids? Kids, can you be one with your parents? Can you love them like I love them? He's not asking us to solve church history.

He's asking us to love one another. Don't make it more complex than it needs to be. Love one another and then the world will believe that you sent me.

[ 9 : 17 ] Amen. Jesus says, the glory that you have given to me, I have given to them that they may be one.

And so for the second time, Jesus is repeating this desire for oneness, that they may be one. But he's adding a word here. The word is glory.

I want you to say that word. Glory. Let that word get in your heart a bit. It's a wonderful word. Glory. Why can I be one with you? Why can you be one with me?

Because I'm not me anymore and you're not you. We're one in God in his glory. We get so caught up in what I bring to the table and how great I am.

Jesus says, no, no, no, no. I'm giving you my glory that I had with the Father before the world existed. You're getting that. So when you see me and I see you, we shouldn't see this temporary jar of clay that we get so caught up in.

[10:23] But what we will one day be in Christ, glorious beings in heaven with God. Not because of me, not because of who I am, what I bring to the table, but because of the glory of God in Christ that the Father has given to Christ and he has given to us through the Holy Spirit a Trinitarian glory again that they may be one.

I wish that we could see each other like this. I wish we could see each other the glorious way that God does. Because then we could just put aside all the pettiness, all the froth of this world and see each other as eternal brothers and sisters in God.

Glory. Jesus continues. For the third time he prays, I in them, you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and have loved them even as you love me.

And as Jesus has prayed for oneness, now let us pray. Father, help us to be one with one another. help us to answer this prayer.

That as Jesus has prayed to you, that we may be one with one another through him. Help us. Help us first to be one with you.

[12:05] Help us put aside anything that's in the way between us, Father. Any sin, anything that's destroying my life. May I be one with you, Father.

May I let anything that you desire be done in my life. May your will be done in me, in each one of us. May your love flow through me.

May we love one another. May we be one with one another, each one of us. May we not be worried about the big things to solve church history or social justice or fix the city.

May we start with the person next to us tonight. Help us to love one another. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen. And so, that's the first part of Jesus' prayer for you, for me. We would have a Trinitarian oneness. Now he turns and he begins to another section, a desire that he has.

[13:16] And he says, Father, I desire that they also whom you have given to me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you gave me because you love me for the foundation of the world.

And this desire of Jesus is not a passive desire, not a wish that he has and he goes on his way. it was an active desire.

He was praying, yes, but it was also his mission to fulfill this desire. Yes, I may be one with him. Yes, I may be where he is.

And right now he is in heaven with the Father, but it was for the joy set before him that he accomplished this desire for you, for me, for our salvation that he suffered under Pontius Pilate, that Jesus died, crucified, died and was buried, descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. So what a strange prayer to pray. And yet he prayed it anyway.

[14:32] He desired it and we should pray like him. We should pray with him. Father, bring us to your side. Father, we desire what he desires.

Change our hearts. That even though we know the story, even though we know that Jesus has already done it, that he has already overcome, that even though from the foundation of the world God predestined those that he had chosen to be with him, pray anyway, pray and desire for Jesus did not let his omniscience get in the way of his prayer.

And we shouldn't let what we know of the story get in the way of our desire to seek God, what he desires for us, to seek his face. And so now as Jesus has prayed that we may be where he is, let us join with him and pray as well.

Father, we desire as your people to be with you, to be with Christ. Help us Father, not to take so seriously this world and all that it sells us and all that it's convincing us, but help us to put our hopes and our desires on that world to which we truly belong and our real home in heaven with you.

We desire that, Father. Help us to desire it more. Help us to long after your presence. And Father, we thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, by whom we may enter into that place.

[16:19] Lord, that he desired it, but he also did it. And so Father, may we learn how to pray through his action, through his prayer. Lord, that sometimes we need to also be the answer to our own prayer.

But that shouldn't stop us from praying. Help us learn to pray. Help us to desire what he desires. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. And finally, the third part of Jesus' prayer.

He says, O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I have made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

And now, Jesus invites us, invites you, and invites me, into a trinitarian love, that the love with which God loved his own son, is the same love that he loves you.

love. We don't get a second-rate love. We don't get the scraps from the table, as it were. The same love that the Father has loved the Son from the foundation of the world is ours in Christ.

[ 17 : 38 ] And that is the same love that Jesus tells us that we are to love one another. And that's a daunting task. That can seem overwhelming, but the key, yet again, is to rest our souls in the love that God has for us.

And then it will come out of us through his Holy Spirit. So let us pray that the name of Jesus Christ would continue to be made known to us.

That the love with which the Father has loved us would continually overwhelm our hearts. That we would know him through his Son. So let us pray.

Father, we thank you that we can pray to you. We thank you that we can come to you through your Son, Jesus Christ. That you did not leave us, you did not abandon us, but you came to us to make us one with you.

We thank you, Father, that you have given us your glory through your Son. We thank you that you will bring us to your side through your Son. Father, how abundant your mercy, how rich your grace, but above all, how great is your steadfast love.

[ 18 : 49 ] For us, your faithfulness to all generations. Thank you, Father, that the love with which you have loved your own Son is now ours, through your Son. So, Father, help us to desire what your Son desires.

Bring us to your side. Submit us to your will that we may all be one, that the world may believe in your Son, Jesus Christ. May our love overflow.

May it be on all our branches. through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And through your Son, teach us to pray, to pray to you, Father, Lord, that you are not distant to us, but you have come near to us in your Son.

Thank you, Father. Mold our prayer, mold our desires, mold our will to be like your sons, that we may be an answer to his prayer that he has prayed for us tonight, and that he's continually praying for us, interceding for us right now, at your side, mediating for us right now, even right now.

And all this we ask not through ourselves, but through your Son, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. And so now, let us hear this passage one more time.

[ 20 : 04 ] And I invite you, in the hearing of this word, to pray with us, to pray with me, to pray with Jesus, as he prays for us. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, they may be in us, so that the world may know that you sent me.

glory, that you have given to me, I have given to them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me, and have loved them, even as you love me.

Father, I desire that those that you have given to me may be with me where I am, to see my glory, that you have given to me, because you loved me, before the foundation of the world.

O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I have made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.

This is the word of the Lord.