

That They May Be One: Jesus, Prayer, and the Anglican Communion

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Preacher: The Venerable Daniel Gifford

- [0 : 00] We're going to look at the Bible and look at Jesus' prayer. And the reason I'm doing this is because any talk about unity has to come out of the Bible.
- An understanding of unity must come from what we understand from the Gospel. So, we're going to look at John 17. And if you turn to...
- I'll see what page it is in the Bibles that you guys have. 9.03. I just want to give you a little bit of a background of this prayer.
- So, it takes place in the context of the Upper Room. It is the night before Jesus is going to go... He's going to be arrested and go to the cross.
- It's the night of the Last Supper. And Jesus prays. Praise. And the extraordinary thing about this passage is that we are eavesdropping.
- [1 : 00] We're listening in as Jesus prays to the Father. So, you hear the relationship between God the Father and God the Son.
- And it's revealing of the very heart of God. The heart of what's happening in the Trinity in Chapter 17. That's why it's such a privilege to be able to read that chapter.
- And Jesus allows the disciples. He brings the disciples into that. So, they are there in the Upper Room hearing him pray to the Father.
- And if you were to break this up, the easiest way to do it is to go from verses 1 through 5. Which is about Jesus praying for himself.
- And he's praying for his glory. Because that is what reveals the Father. That's how we know God. Is as Jesus is glorified. And then the second thing he prays is in verses 6 through 19.
- [2 : 02] And that's praying for his disciples. And we're going to see. Well, we won't actually spend time on that. But I do want to say that in that prayer for the disciples, he is also praying generally for us as well.
- And the reason I say that is because a lot of what he says in that prayer between 6 and 19, those verses, is echoed in 20 through 26.
- But I want to particularly look today at just 7 verses, 20 through 26. Because in that third part, having prayed for himself, having prayed for his disciples, Jesus prays for all who will believe.
- And that's what we want to look at right now. Kurt, would you like to stand up and read that little passage?
- 22? To 26, to the end. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.
- [3 : 05] That they may all be one, just 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 have sent me.

The glory that you have given 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 love them, even as you love me.

Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am. To see my glory that you have given me, because you love 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 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. Thank you. Thank you, Kurt. And what I'm going to do, and looking as I go through this, is I'd like to really ask you to think about the local congregation here at St. John's, but also about the wider fellowship we have in the Anglican Communion, as we go through applying what's happening in this passage to that.

[4 : 33] So, the first thing that Jesus prays for, in verses 20-23, is real Christian unity. Now, he's already prayed this up in verse 11 for his disciples.

He's prayed for unity. And he wasn't just praying that the disciples might not quarrel when he's gone. That's not what he's, he's after something much bigger.

He says at the end of verse 21, if you look there, that, or at the beginning, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you.

And then you look down at verse 22, it says, that they may be one, even as we are one. God the Father and God the Son are one. And then you look down in verse 23, and again, it's repeated a third time, that they may become perfectly one.

And so you have this strong prayer for unity, that every single person who believes in Jesus through all of history will experience that unity.

[5 : 46] Now, this is learners' exchange, so I want there to be a bit of exchange here. I wonder if you, if anybody wants to share a time when you have experienced real Christian unity with, perhaps with somebody who is very, very different from you, very, very different background, culture, perhaps a station in life, and you knew that there was a closeness in relationship with you because of faith in Jesus Christ.

Does anybody want to share when you've experienced something like that in your life? Yeah, Olaf. Olaf. In 1976, arriving in the Kremlin, surrounded by the emblems of the communist regime, it was possible to see on every ancient church building around the Kremlin, crosses on the tops of the Kremlin.

It first shocked me. And then going to a mass in a Russian Orthodox Church, what happened when I got into the church, people came and embraced me.

So that was a shock. Yeah. It was a real sense of unity. Yes, yes. And you'd never met them before. Absolutely. Someone I would. Yeah, yeah.

I think, yeah, go ahead. No, do you want another one? Yeah, sure. I would. I would. My husband was teaching at Fusol University in Fugiljian province.

[7 : 25] And when they heard that I was a Christian, I was taken to the upper room at the university. They were strong Christians. And it was just, you just felt like you were the angels. And you really felt strong, strong unity, as you're saying, with these poor fellows who didn't dare to be out in the church.

Yeah. Yeah. So it was very special. Yeah. Yeah. I think those are incredible examples because it's not because of any previous experience together.

It's not because you share common culture, background. It's purely because of a common relationship to Jesus Christ, that there is a recognition that you are brothers and sisters in Christ, not even being able to speak the same language in both your cases, and to receive an embrace like that.

I mean, that is extraordinary. And this is something that's a supernatural reality. And this is why Jesus is praying for that.

He is praying for that unity to be true for all Christians who believe. And I want to talk about how that unity begins, what it is, and what it shows, first of all.

[8 : 52] So that's what he's praying about. And then these are shorter points that I'm going to make before I continue on. But I want you to notice how that unity begins.

Because in verse 20, he's praying for those who will believe in me. How? Through their word.

And so what he's praying for is that he's saying that it is through hearing and understanding God's word that we're actually brought into that unity that we just heard described.

That in a Russian Orthodox church, far, far away, and especially in that politically divided situation, it is the word of God that brought those people to that church and that brought Olaf there as well.

It is the basis of unity. It is because people know God through his word. So it's not... Real unity does not happen because...

[9 : 57] Simply because we are baptized or because we read the Bible or because we take communion or because we are very involved in a ministry in the church.

It is by believing and putting your trust in Jesus Christ, the Jesus of that word, that we are brought into that unity.

And so the Jesus we believe is the Jesus of the apostolic message. And that's what the people in China and in Moscow would have completely in common is that apostolic message.

And we're going to get to this, but the problem that led to Anik having to be formed and the situation that we find ourselves now with the alternative structures is that the Anglican Church of Canada no longer believed or called authoritative God's word in certain areas.

And in fact, when you look at the basis for moving ahead, for example, with same-sex unions, the process necessarily required that you question God's word as being authoritative in all things doctrinal and moral.

[11 : 14] So the studies that would take place is, you know, is the Bible the authority or how is the Bible the authority? And the conclusion that was reached, certainly in our diocese by our bishop, is that the Bible is one authority among many.

And you look at all of those things and piece them together. And so the word of God was undermined and that led directly to a division.

That's what takes unity away. And see, the problem with losing that authority is very easy to create a Jesus that is a figment of your own imagination.

And of course, often a reflection of what the values of the culture are. It is not, but the authentic Jesus has to be the Jesus of the apostles' message.

And that's what Jesus is talking here. And there's an objective and a subjective facet to this. You know, the objective part is what I'm just talking about, that unity is based on the eyewitness testimony of the apostles.

[12 : 22] But the subjective part of that facet is that we actually must put our trust in him. You know, that there is a living faith. And this is what brings unity.

unity. And there is a sense in our putting our trust in him that we are actively, we are living out this relationship that God brings into our lives, the relationship between us and the Father.

So anyway, this is where unity begins. It's apostolic and it's not negotiable. So the second thing is, what is it? Well, very simply, well, let's look at verse 21 at the end again.

This is a key verse. That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I in you. Now that's an extraordinary thing because it's saying that we are learning that just as the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father, we are brought into a relationship of loving God the Father and knowing that he loves us as well.

And so it's not an analogy. It's not, you know, let's love like this. We are actually brought into the very relationship of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in true unity.

[13 : 52] unity. And that's why, you know, he'll keep going on in verse 22. He'll say, the glory that you have given me as I have given to them that they may be one even as we are one.

And it goes deeper in verse 23. He says, I in them and you in me that they may become perfectly one. You see this, it's a sharing of the life of the Trinity.

It's being brought into that life. And I think we need to just say a quick word about what that life is because it is about mutual perfect love within God.

The God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is why the Trinity is so precious to us because the Trinity existed from before, you know, before time, of course, in all of eternity.

And at creation, God, God out of his love creates everything that we have in this world.

[14 : 58] Yeah, I want to, I want to try to, try to simplify this a little bit. God did not, God did not feel as though he needed something more and so he created humanity.

God is, is perfectly sufficient. But God's love, the nature of it is that it is an overflowing love that, that spills over into relationships with those outside of God, outside of the Trinity.

And so he created humanity out of that overflowing love. And the very essence of who we are is we are designed to know God. We are designed in the image of God, we are designed to know him, and it is a, it is this act of love.

And when the fall took place, that overflowing love continued so that God works in the heartbeat of God and what he desires for us and for this world is that we are redeemed from sin, that we are forgiven and brought into that life of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

And that's what he's doing now. He's bringing people throughout the world into the circle of God's love through the death and the resurrection of Jesus through his atonement.

[16 : 14] The purpose of it is so, is completely relational. So, real Christianity, a real unity then, comes from being brought into that love other people.

It's a spiritual thing, it's not something that you can construct humanly. You can't make a structure that will do that, we can't engineer it. Because God gives it as he brings people into his love.

So, any structures that are put into place actually have to serve what God is doing in that way. People, Jesus draws people close to him. And I'll give a little illustration of that.

I'm sure most of you have been on a Ferris wheel before. And when I think of Ferris wheels, we went to Disneyland, our family did, the big trip about a year or so ago.

And when I think of Ferris wheels, I think of Mickey Mouse. There's a massive thing that you kept on seeing, this huge Ferris wheel. It was the scariest ride that Catherine went on, by the way.

[17 : 18] And it's because we happened to get into one of those carriages that actually swing, you know. And you feel like you're going to be just flipped right off. But you think of unity in this way that we as people in the church are on the outside spokes of that wheel, of that Ferris wheel.

And you think of the hub as being God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. As we are far away from God, or maybe don't know, far away from that hub, we are also far away from one another.

So each of the spokes of that hub are pretty far apart. But, the rim, I should say, are very far apart. But as you are brought further down that spoke towards the hub, of course, all of those spokes become closer together as well.

And it is as we are drawn into that hub, the life of God the Father, God the Son, that we are brought closer to one another as well. This is true in all our relationships.

It's true in marriage. It's true in our friendships and in our church, that as we are drawn into the love of God the Father and the truth that's been revealed in Him, we actually are brought close to one another as well.

[18 : 31] And that's why, you know, as we bring people into the church and to know God Himself, we are actually bringing people into a family, into close relationships of men and women and boys and girls.

So, and then the last thing that I'll say about unity is, is the third aspect is that Jesus promises in this age to continue making the Father known.

And I want you to notice this because there's something extraordinary here that happens.

If you, if you read, I'll read 25 and 26 with you. It says there, O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you and these, that's the disciples, know that, or those that will know you, these know that you have sent me and I 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.

So, this is the thing, it says the work that God, that Jesus has been delighting to do is, throughout this prayer is to make the Father known. He loves to do this, he makes himself known through the work of the Holy Spirit and this is what we're about as our, as the church.

[20 : 07] And, this is a promise that he is going to continue doing this through his disciples, through all those who know God, that means you and I. He's been doing it for 2,000 years.

He did it when you came to faith, that he was continuing this active work in the world. And many of you could tell your testimonies of how God continued to make himself known by making him known to you.

And, and this is something that we need to remember because if you jump back into, let's just look at verse 19, it says there, you know, it says, for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in the truth.

Well, this is a prayer that we will be sanctified in the truth, that we will be set apart into the truth of who Jesus is. Why? So that God will continue to make himself known through us.

And so the promise that Jesus is making there is actually a promise that directly involves you and me, that we are actually to live out the distinctive love for Jesus, to serve the world by serving Jesus together, and by actually speaking of this apostolic truth, this message that brings unity.

[21 : 35] And so we need to really pray for one another that this Christian fellowship of St. John's will be what Jesus prayed it would be, that it would be something that is united in Jesus.

One, just as God and the Father and God the Son are one. This is actually our work, this is what we are about, it is the result of being faithful to Jesus.

Now, there's the basis, those are nice pictures, there's a very quick thumbnail basis, and I want you to notice that the reason the world is quite affected by this.

It says, we learn in this passage that if you look at it, the world will know that Jesus has been sent by the Father by our own unity. And what is meant by that is when the world looks at an organization, like the church, they think, well, you know, it's like the tennis club, it's like the golf club, people have a common interest, and they like each other because they're doing the same activity.

But when the world sees people who are very different from one another, who would not naturally be in the same place even, who would not naturally be in relationship with each other, who may not even speak the same language, when they see them loving each other, and giving themselves over to one another in love, and there is unity around who Jesus is, the reality of Jesus, the world stands up and takes notice.

[23 : 17] There is something distinctive and different about this club called the church. So that's a segue into the Anglican communion, because the Anglican communion is that.

it is many, many different cultures. I'm going to talk a bit about my time in Nairobi, but there were delegates from 40 countries, 40 countries that were there.

And the thing that's interesting about the Anglican communion is you have different cultures, different languages, but very different churchmanships too. So our Malawi sisters who are coming in a couple of weeks, their services will often have incense and will look very Catholic in a lot of ways.

They're preaching the same gospel that we are preaching. And you will also have Anglicans that look pretty close to a Baptist church that you'll see in places, or a Pentecostal church.

And you have this all within the Anglican communion. And it can be a powerful sign to the world. of the reality of Jesus, that God the Father sent Jesus into the world.

[24 : 36] And so this is potentially a great strength of the Anglican church. And I'm going to give you some information that you may know already. And that is that there are four instruments of unity, sometimes called instruments of communion, in the Anglican church.

One is the Archbishop of Canterbury. and he is a real focus for unity because he's the president of the primates meeting, or he calls the primates meeting, he's the president of the Anglican consultative council, and he also calls the Lambeth conference as well.

And I'll talk briefly about each of those instruments of unity, which are really meant, well, I'll talk about that in a minute. And I just want a quick view of the Anglican communion.

This slide cut off Canada, unfortunately, and Northern Canada. There's no message there. That PowerPoint was sending me, I don't think. But what it shows is that the Anglican communion is divided up into dioceses, but also groups of dioceses called a province.

So this is a province, Canada and the U.S. are, but we as ACNA overlap that. And of course, this is unprecedented in Anglican history.

[26 : 01] This is the southern cone that we were first attached to, where Greg Venables was. So, you know, you've got Argentina, Chile, and all these countries up here too, Peru, and Brazil is one.

We have this part of South America, that is. And then this is all one province, and that's the Anglican Church of South Africa, southern Africa, and that includes several countries there, you know, South Africa, Angola.

I'll tell you about Angola. There's a, when I was, this was a number of years ago, I was still in Pender Harbor, and I got a call, 10-year, 10-year anniversary of, by my high school reunion, high school graduation.

And so the yearbook was calling me to get information. They called very early, they thought it was 9 in the morning in, it was 9 in the morning in West Virginia, so.

I was tired at 6. It woke me up, and she asked me all these questions, and I think I probably wasn't entirely clear, but anyway, got, my friends got the yearbook, and people wondered what I was doing, and it says under occupation, Angolan priest.

[27 : 21] So I got lots of calls, how did you become an Angolan priest, and what is that? But this is, this is, this is all one province.

This is the province of Central Africa where Malawi is, and that includes a number of places as well, like, well, Zimbabwe is there, Zambia, and Malawi, as well as Botswana, I think, is there, yeah, and, yeah.

And then, and then you get this, this province here, which includes, these are all separate provinces, so each country is, that's what that means, so there's Tanzania, and there's Sudan as well, and our Republic of Congo.

This is all one province that goes here, here, and here in the Middle East, so this is, this is one diocese here, this is where, um, it's a break up into smaller little places, but that's where Munir is, he's the archbishop of that area, but this is all one province based in Jerusalem, and this is all, the Southeast Asia is one area too, it includes Nepal, so they're, and that area is really, you know, missionary stuff, but all the blue ones, they're separate provinces, each of those countries have a, have a, um, province.

Um, yeah, so anyway, this is just a, just a quick view of what they're dealing with, with the instruments of communion. Now, the Archbishop of Canterbury, um, as I said, he calls the Lambeth Conference, he chairs the Primates Meeting, he is the president of the Anglican Consultative Council, which we're going to talk about in a minute.

[29 : 06] Um, he is really, he has, he does not have any legal jurisdiction, but he's really a, uh, a symbol of unity for the Anglican, um, communion.

And that's why he, uh, he has an ecumenical role where he represents, um, the Anglican Church in all of its, um, relationships with other Christian churches in the world.

He also has an interfaith role, so he, he, uh, leads in respect to Anglican relationships with other religions. Okay, so, there's the Archbishop, then there's the Primates Meeting, which all of those provinces I told you about, there's 38 of them, it's each led by, uh, a bishop that oversees all of them, and they're called a primate, and that was started in 1978.

Uh, it was an opportunity to, for leisurely thought, prayer, and deep consultation. Uh, and it's, it's met regularly since then. Often, every, every year or two, but the importance of those meetings has really increased since the crisis has come up.

It's become more and more important, uh, and, you know, the latest one, which is probably one of the most important ones, was met in January, and you probably know that what happened there is that, um, that the Episcopal Church of the United States was sanctioned.

[30 : 29] And so, they, they were, uh, for the next three years, they are not to take part in any of the, the committees of the Church, or to represent the Anglican Communion in any way.

Um, but the Anglican Church, being the Anglican Church, said, uh, there's loopholes in this, and, uh, so the Episcopal Church has, is coming, uh, to what I'm gonna, uh, show up next, which is, oh, sorry.

Um, you know what, I'm missing one slide, so I'll have to tell you about it. There, there is something called the Anglican Consultative Council. And this group, um, the role of that group is called the ACC.

It has, it has bishops, priests, and lay people from throughout the world. It's a, it's a fairly small group, but it's meant to facilitate the cooperative work of churches in the Anglican Communion.

That's their official title. And they exchange information between the provinces and churches. They, they help to coordinate common action. Um, but it has been paralyzed by disunity, uh, around the gospel.

[31 : 36] And you see that happening in that the, the Episcopal Church is sending a representative there, uh, and that has caused great concern, uh, because the primate said, look, we, we've just agreed to this, and, and now you're going against it.

Uh, and some of you may know that, um, this is, this is the 16th, by the way, meeting of this. So there hasn't been a huge number of them, uh, the primates meeting.

It's meeting in Lusaka, Zambia. And, uh, Archbishop Menir, who is based in Egypt, um, is not coming to it.

He's, he was a key member of it. And he was clear that, he says, you know, the instruments of unity in order to have good relationships need to support each other's decision in those areas of responsibility given to them by the Lambeth councils.

So he's praying for a unity that's based on the truth of Jesus to come out here. But he rightly has stepped back from that to say, this, this actually can't happen.

[32 : 41] It's actually not an instrument of unity if you're doing this. Um, so that's, so that's what's happening right now. And I don't know if anybody have it, has any questions about that meeting or what, you know, what that means.

Yeah, go ahead. Um, how do, how do you get chosen? Well, that's a good question. Um, they, they are, they are appointed at, at Lambeth, but there's also standing committees that, that choose them as, as you go along.

And there's terms that you, um, that you serve as well. So I'm actually not sure of all the committees that choose them and where the vote takes place, but there is an influence, which I'm going to get into from Lambeth, um, for those, for those committees.

And they're, they are a mix. They're not, but they tend to be, they tend to be dominated because there's, there's, uh, not good representation, um, by, by liberals.

So, you know, for instance, Uganda has, has 10 times as many, uh, Christians going to church as, as all of North America combined, Anglicans that are going to church.

[33 : 54] So, but they have the same number of representatives as far as clergy and people who are on these, um, committees. So, but that's a good question. I don't know for sure all, what the names of the committees are that choose them.

Uh, but they come out of, out of Lambeth too. Any other questions about that? Why does the Episcopal church want to go?

Well, because, because they are, um, um, they are wanting influence and they see it very important for them to have a place in the Anglican communion.

And it's a denial that, that what they are doing is actually against the gospel of Christ. So they, what, what has been told them is you have gone against scripture.

You have gone against what brings us unity, which is the apostolic message. And it is very hard to accept that. If you hear any, uh, any, um, uh, press releases from the Episcopal church, they do not acknowledge any wrongdoing whatsoever.

[34 : 58] They see nothing to repent of. Yet the primates have said, you need to repent. So, you know, it's just acting out of that denial really. Yeah.

What about the Anglican church in Canada at the moment in the diocese is new? What's ministry of the more in comparison to the Episcopal? Yeah. So this is a very good question. So what, the reason why the Episcopal church was sanctioned is because at their last general convention, they officially changed the canon of marriage, the doctrine of marriage, they changed, uh, and said it is no longer just between a, uh, a man and a woman and an exclusive relationship.

So, um, that did not officially take place yet in Canada. So there is a reference to that in the primates meeting in their communication that says this may, the sanction may need to be, uh, applied to other, uh, jurisdictions that are contemplating the same thing.

Well, that's Canada. So, and Canada has stepped back a bit now. The general, the, uh, general synod that's coming up, the bishops have said it's probably not going to pass. So they will continue to do it in an unofficial way.

That's, which is underhanded. Yes. In the meantime, is there any statistic how many members are leaving the Anglican Church of Canada? Yeah. Uh, there are, there are more and more statistics.

[36 : 20] Uh, what, the ones that I've seen are often with the U.S. and I think it's similar to Canada. But it's usually between two and three percent drop every year. Uh, and of course, you know, in ten years, you're, that's a thirty percent.

So it's, it's, uh, it's continuing to, uh, really, really decline at an alarming rate. Yeah. It seems to be continuing, not, uh, not changing. Yeah.

Yeah. I'm a bit unclear about the names of the certain groups, but you, you, you're saying it's a group that sanctioned the Episcopal Church. Yes. And is it possible that they want to be unclear in their statements to such a degree that the Episcopal Church of the U.S.A. could ignore or deny that they are being sanctioned?

Yeah. Why don't they make it more clear? So they do not deny that they need to be sanctioned? Yeah. That's a good question. The reason is because each of those four instruments of unity, which have actually been clarified in the last few decades, two decades, because of the crisis.

Like, it wasn't, it was just a way of working together. I should tell you that all of the, the, the provinces are pretty autonomous. It's like a confederation, the Anglican communion.

[37 : 39] What has, and so the, and the Archbishop Canterbury is not like the Pope. He doesn't lay down the law and this is the way it's going to be right now anyway. So what's happened is that these instruments of unity have been clarified as far as what they are doing more and more.

It has been, it's been developing. And so what was unclear is how the relationship of the primates meeting with the Anglican Council, Consultative Council are.

So the ACC said, look, that primates meeting doesn't have jurisdiction over us. We have a mandate. It hasn't been changed and therefore we're going to continue on.

So you see what's happening is the primates meeting has gaining more and more influence and the ACC or the, or the person in charge of it anyway, has not recognized that change.

It's just evolved that the power of that primates meeting, which makes sense because they're the ones who are actually overseeing, you know, big, big parts of the Anglican communion.

[38 : 42] They're seeing the effect of the disunity. But that's why it's not, it's not absolutely clear how the primates meeting, how the ACC interact with one another.

So you can get loopholes like that. Yeah. Who's the chair of the Anglican Consultative Council? I can't remember who it is now. Can't remember. Yeah.

I mean, it changes every two years. Is this person supposedly appointed by either the primates meeting or the it's not by the primates meeting.

It's by, it is, it is in Lambeth and standing committees within the Anglican communion as well that do it. Yeah. And all of those structures are often dominated by liberals.

So, yeah. I can understand why that fellow from Egypt isn't going to go to the meeting because he's not agreeing with what's happening. But could he possibly be giving up what might be an important vote?

[39 : 42] It's much more important. The statement for him being there and legitimizing them being there is much more important than the vote that he would be giving up. Yeah. It's very important what he's done there because it is a very strong message to the whole communion about what has happened.

It's reaffirming what the primates have decided. Yeah. What would happen if they all do the same thing and not? Well, there's a mix on the primates meeting, you know.

So, so there will be several primates that won't be going that are on the ACC but not just him. Yeah. So, it's, it compromises it and yeah.

One more question. No. I think I'll answer some of the questions in the next slide. Do you think the end of the diocese in the U.S. will be sanctioned in the world and the curse is shifting away from the biblical teaching about that?

Well, the diocese won't be, our local diocese, the whole of Canada will be. So, they're very much lumping all of Canada together. So, what the, what the General Synod decides is what will be, is what will be responded to by the primates meeting.

[40 : 58] Yeah. So, it's not, it's no longer the case. Really, the diocese of New Westminster is now in the same place that a number of diocese are. So, they're unofficially doing these same-sex blessings.

In quite a number of dioceses, this is happening. I think in at least a third of the dioceses, out of the 30, however many we have in Canada, at least 12 of them are.

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. So, moving on. Now, the Lambeth Conference is the other instrument of unity.

It's funny I left the ACC out. This is the whole problem. That was probably something that was unconscious. Freudian or something. But, so, so the Lambeth Conference is, is where all the bishops in the Anglican Communion meet every 10 years.

So, there's about 720 dioceses in all of the world for the Anglican Communion. And so, all of the leaders of those, the diocesan bishops, are invited to Lambeth. And it's not a governing body, as you say here.

[42 : 01] It's, it's collaborative, it's consultative. Because the Anglican Communion, as I mentioned, is really an international association of autonomous and national and regional churches. And, and you see, this works fine as long as there is that unity that comes out of that, out of that commitment to the message of the disciples.

As long as it's a living reality. But, it breaks down once you have large parts imposing a revisionist understanding of the apostles' message.

Right? And what it does, and its purpose is also to express the mind of the Communion on issues of the day. And God has used this. This is, this is why the resolutions about human sexuality came out, which are very biblical, which were committed to as a Anglican Communion through Lambeth.

This is, this is the mind of the Communion. And I should say, this is very interesting. It first met in 1867 because of a Canadian request of feeling like we didn't want to be separate from what was happening in the Anglican Communion.

And there was great misgivings about doing this. But they did it, finally. And it has actually been a real instrument of unity so far.

[43 : 19] Yeah. Yeah. So, now, what happened, I said so far, is that after that, after that resolution was made, that I told you about human sexuality, between that and the next one in 2008, that's when the crisis came up.

And that's where there was a repudiation of what Lambeth actually had said about human sexuality and about the Bible. So, as a result, many bishops did not go to Lambeth in 2008 and instead went to the first Gafcon in Jerusalem.

And there, a lot of them are on the Mount of Olives. And, you know, that's a neat picture because it shows you the mix of the Anglican Communion. The different races that are there, the, you know, clergy, lay, bishops, everybody all together, worshipping God together, they are in unity.

But that, a number of those bishops, there's about 200 bishops that did not go to Lambeth. So, that's almost a third. And went here. Some of the bishops that went here also went to Lambeth as well.

But this, what this was, was a movement, as it says, for unity. That's, that's what Gafcon was about. It's not about a separate Anglican communion.

[44 : 45] They always, they will always say, we're not leaving the Anglican, we are not leaving the Anglican communion, we are the Anglican communion. Very important for us to, because it is a movement for unity.

It is a movement to renew our understanding of the gospel, the true gospel throughout the world. And that's why, that's why Gafcon was started.

And a very helpful, a very helpful aspect of that Jerusalem Gafcon was the Jerusalem Declaration.

And I do invite you to look at that, if you haven't looked at it before, you just go to fca.net and they have copies of that. It is very simply reflecting Jesus' prayer for unity.

It is a call back to the message of the apostles. It is a call back to that supernatural unity that comes from knowing God.

[45 : 48] It's about renewing this understanding of the gospel in the lives of all the churches. And it's a call for repentance. Both Gafcon meetings had repentance at the very center of it.

Of us who were there, as well as a call for repentance for those who have wandered from the faith. So it's a very important movement because it highlights repentance and it highlights mission into the world.

Does anybody have any questions about Gafcon? That's a mistake, by the way. We actually joined ANAC in 2008.

But you see, what happened was that our leaving in 2008, interestingly, coincided. Gafcon happened two or three months later.

So it's like God just brought this thing up at this time because we are brought into the unity of the gospel through that. Yes?

[46 : 51] What does Gafcon say? So Gafcon means Global Anglican Futures Conference. It was actually a conference. So if you say Gafcon conference, you're saying conference twice.

But what that was is an expression and it actually brought about something called the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans. So it's delegates from those confessing Anglicans from around the world.

And there were about 1,200 of them, including 290 bishops. And then the second Gafcon was larger than that. And but I just I wanted to highlight the timing of those two things of St. John's joining and this coming up.

And that's where, you know, it's those two things that I just mentioned. Gafcon and Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans are they're very much the same thing.

And it represents at least 35 million Anglicans around the world. And what they did in 2009 was they gave formal recognition to ACNA, which is we're part of our province in North America and its orders.

- [47 : 59] In other words, the ordinations. And it welcomed it as a full partner province. So the Archbishop Canterbury does not still yet accept us, but you see movement towards that.
- So at the primates meeting, our primate for the ACNA was present, was invited there to that primates meeting, which is very significant. Yeah. Can you tell me what is the distinction that confessing it is?
- What's the difference between that and what the same thing is? Well, all that is is that it is that they, this group wants people to sign up for the mission of the church.
- So it's not so you can online just simply sign up in churches as well to be part of this fellowship. And there's no dues. There's no it's just signing on to the Jerusalem declaration, which is signing on to the gospel.
- And so they're wanting people to commit to being Christ centered, being about a gospel mission to the world around them and to living out the life of Christ is really basic.
- [49 : 10] It's something that all Anglicans are actually normally meant to do. But in this age of uncertainty, it's really articulating and being clear about it.
- And what it does, too, is it actually brings people together to strengthen one another in that mission of renewal in the church and mission to the world. And there's a lot of very challenging mission situations that people find themselves in, including us.
- We're in one of the most challenging ones because we're dealing with secularism around us. They're also dealing with militant Islam, which we're going to talk about in a minute, too, as well as syncretism.
- So that mission is difficult. And, you know, that fellowship actually is helping one another in it. Yeah. Do any of the sanctioned people try to get to that meeting?
- They'd be welcome to come. It'd be great to have them sign on. You know, what you have is... Anyway, they probably wouldn't feel comfortable in some ways, but they'd be welcome to come.
- [50 : 18] They would need to sign on. They would need to sign on to the Jerusalem Declaration, though. And they wouldn't. You couldn't in good conscience. So, yeah. It just seems to me that this kind of inclusiveness is seeding disunity.
- We're trying to get unity within the organization. Jesus said, if you're I offend you, cut it out. Right. So letting them come or acknowledging that you have things in common with them is counterproductive.
- Gafcon sounds to me like a much more productive way of arriving in unity than all of this bureaucracy. Yeah. Well, I may not have been clear. The Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans is Gafcon as well.
- And in order to join that, you have to sign on to the Jerusalem Declaration. And there is no liberal who could sign on to it in good conscience. Yeah.
- So is that not a better instrument for unity? Exactly. Than some of this bureaucracy? Absolutely. Because, you see, you're exactly right.
- [51 : 23] It is a movement. And that's what they call themselves. It is a movement of unity because it is a movement of the gospel back into the gospel. And you've put your finger on it.
- That's exactly what it is. It is a far more effective instrument of unity than those four I mentioned. Yeah. Yeah. So why bother with this? Yeah. I know.
- I have. When I became and I met with people, David Short said, did I have trouble with, you know, any of the things I've learned about us. I said, I have no trouble with theology.

I have a whole lot of trouble with the ecclesiology. Yes. Because I came from a tradition that didn't do that kind of stuff. Yeah. But if you have that unity, that supernatural unity that comes from a commitment to the truth, which it has to be on, those four things can be a servant to that happening, which is what it originally was intended to do.

But, of course, once you come into a crisis where you are giving up on the gospel, then they become, those structures became, in some ways, they can become obsolete almost.

[52 : 27] Now, it's still a minority that are against this, but they are wreaking havoc in the communion right now. Yeah. And so it's not the structure itself that is bad.

It is the leaving of the gospel that is bad. In fact, these things have been powerful ways for us to maintain our hold on the gospel. Yeah. How many ethnic churches are there in Canada?

72. Now, some of them are quite small. So, you know, of those 72, about 25 to 30 would be self-supporting.

Yeah. So it's small. It's a mission, beginning mission organization. So our church, our diocese is one diocese amongst, I can't remember how many dioceses there are now in Acne.

But it's close to 20, anyway. Yeah. I was wondering how many million are John Gap funds. Well, this is the interesting thing.

[53 : 35] Even, that's people who have signed on to that. There's also something called the Global South, which a number of those haven't officially signed on. Individuals have. But they haven't signed on because they don't want to rock the boat too much as far as, you know, they're nervous about there being a split.

But they're completely in agreement with the Jerusalem Declaration and have great relationships with Gafcom. So there's, then there's another, you know, who knows how many, probably 20 million.

The total number officially of the Anglican communion is 75 to 80 million. But that includes, you know, England. Everybody who says otherwise, who doesn't say otherwise is an Anglican, right?

So, but, you know, of the church, that's the thing, of the church going Anglicans, 90% would be very much in line with what Gafcom is saying in Jerusalem Declaration.

That's the great hopeful thing. But there needs to be a concerted movement of unity so that we are not derailed by some powerful groups like Canada and the United States.

[54 : 46] And that's why that movement is so important. Yeah. After the climate statement came out, our friends, you know, our friends at this church went to the cathedral to return to guest preacher.

And it came to me as a warning of how fierce this dispute is. That their official response at the cathedral, which was very, very angry.

I'm not in the character. Was that here? Yes, that's the cathedral. They said, let us continue to pray for our enemies in this battle. So it has become, I think that should be humble of us.

We must be patient and kind and faithful. Yes. Realize the fierceness of the feelings about this issue. That's right. Yeah, what we have to remember, and this is, you know, Sheila, you asked about why, you know, these people are in those positions and why they would want to go to the ACC.

It is because they really see that as their gospel. Progressive human rights, as they understand it, is the gospel. And they see that as the future of our church.

[55 : 57] You know, that we will be all enlightened one day to this true gospel. But you see it as a different gospel, of course, right? And that's why there is that passionate commitment.

Because it is a movement they see that's a godly movement. Yeah. You know, we see and hear that in the Bible, don't we? That a powerful delusion is sent.

Well, this is what's going on. Yeah. There's a very powerful movie in town right now. There's a book called God is Not Dead 2.

Oh, yes. And you will see the angry side of the other church. And what it's doing in the schools, what it's doing in the families, what it's doing all over North America.

Yeah. And then if you look at the different provinces and states around the world that have been affected by this other gospel, it's just unbelievable what they're doing, taking people to court.

[56 : 59] Yeah. No, it's just, it's amazing. The thing that I found impressive about GAFCON and this fellowship is that there is exactly what Harvey is describing.

There is a very powerful humility that you see. And a recognition of our own need for repentance and really reaching out, not only our non-Christian neighbors, but also those who are in complete disagreement in the ancient communion, to do that in a way that is Christian and loving.

But it is standing firm. Like, if you read Bishop Meneer's letter. I know, I know, I know Meneer.

He's, I had a class with him and his wife. And he is, he, he is a real example of humble Christian, powerful leadership.

So he's a very impressive guy. But he embodies that, I think. Yeah. Can you spell that? M-O-U-N-E-E-R. That's his first name. M-O-U-N-E-E-R.

[58 : 10] Yeah. Yeah, Beth. I have dear friends who are conservative clergy in the Irish Church of Canada.

Yeah. And so it's a difficult situation for, and you probably know this over and over again, across the country, is figuring out how, what kind of conciliatory, or how do we manage this kind of situation, even in our own city?

M-hmm. We know people who are, who are believers, but they're in a church. Yeah. Yeah.

Well, you know, here's an interesting thing, and then I'll have Jim Packer speak. But in Gafcon, in Nairobi, two of the bishops from the Anglican Church of Canada were there.

And they're from the Arctic. Now, they were a little bit, fairly inexperienced. They said, well, why didn't you invite us? And I said, you know what? If I had, you would have lost funding, for one thing.

[59 : 32] You're going to experience fallout because you came here. But they were completely and really enthusiastically supportive of what's happening here and just thought this is the greatest movement.

You know, and they're in the Canadian House of Bishops. And we do have strong Christians. I mean, I was talking to the Bishop of Saskatchewan. And he, you know, what he sees himself as is somebody like the Global South.

And I'm like somebody in Gafcon, you know, taking two different approaches. So that's the way they look at it. And certainly, both of our goal, the thing that we both have in common is we want and we pray for the repentance of the Anglican Church of Canada.

This is what we hope and pray for all of the time. Yeah. Yes, Jim. I was going to say, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that money is involved in all of this.

And the Episcopal Church in the States has tons of money in the bank. Which means, first of all, that their mindset is we finance the younger dioceses in the Anglican community.

- [60 : 51] Historically, they have done a great deal of that. And it's generated, as it seems to me, a sense of domination, which, how can I say it, secular, the secular leadership of the U.S. tends to, how can I say it, lapse into, in relation to the rest of the world.
- It's happening all the time. And it's a cultural mindset, which it will take them a good deal of further time and discussion and, well, just living to get out of.
- The thought of America as top nation because, well, for a number of reasons, but because America has got so much money.
- That thought is there, surely, in the situation. It isn't often verbalized, but it's a reality one has to deal with when one's thinking of the place of the Episcopal Church in the Anglican future.
- It's something that it seems to me we have to pray will somehow be, what can I say, broken down, broken up, dissolved away.
- [62 : 22] What's needed is some honest Christian humility amongst the leadership of the Episcopal Church, as well as orthodoxy, you see.
- And that honest humility is something that only God can give when they have so much money in the bank.
- I'm not answering any questions. I'm simply saying this is something to be realistic about. Do you not agree? Absolutely. And this is why it's a long road, this renewal movement of Gafcon, because it is dealing with those kinds of things.
- And there's diabolical aspects to how that money is being used. There is a desire for influence among vulnerable African dioceses and provinces and so forth.
- There is pushing liberal professors and so forth into African and Asian seminaries. So all of that work is being done, too.
- [63 : 26] You have to remember this. And this is another reason why this movement is so very, very important. But that's an incredibly important thing to keep in mind, what's going on.
- That's why we have to keep prayerful. Okay, so we have five minutes. And I can see what's happening out in the congregation. They're actually finished. So I'm going to end there.
- But I just want to say one thing as we end. That there's three priorities.
- There's making disciples. This is the Gafcon movement from Nairobi. Making disciples, which there's a couple aspects to that.
- One is evangelizing. One's supporting gospel initiatives. One's guarding the gospel, which we've been talking about. And the second priority is deepening discipleship. And that's really reaching out.
- [64 : 23] And how do we deal with aggressive secularism and militant Islam and seductive syncretism? It's all about mission, which I want you to notice. And the third priority is gospel transformation.
- That the transforming effect of the gospel affects society. It transforms society. So there's a real mission focus to this move towards unity in the gospel.
- That's just natural. It just comes with it. And I wanted to just highlight that as I end. And just leave us with this prayer again.
- This is what we pray for. When Jesus prays, we know that a righteous man who prays, that prayer will be answered. Jesus is the perfectly righteous person. And so we know that the prayer is actually a promise.

And that's a promise to hold on to and pray. I do not ask for these only, but for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. Just as you, Father, are in me, I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

[65 : 27] You know, it is unity for the purpose of the world around us. And this is why it's such an urgent prayer and the thing that we really commit ourselves to in the Anglican context.

Thank you.