

Traditional Home service Sunday 21st May

OPENING PRAYER

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

PRAYER OF PENITENCE

Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAISE

Let everything be said and done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Jesus Christ. Sing psalms, hymns and sacred songs:

Let us sing to God with thankful hearts. Open our lips, Lord: and we shall praise your name.

HYMN 1 (*At the name of Jesus*)

READINGS - Acts 1.6-14
1 Peter 4.12-14; 5.6-11
John 17.1-11

TALK

CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Spend some time praying for our nation, our community and our families.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

HYMN 2 (*Father, I love you*)

CONCLUSION

The Lord bless you and watch over you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Hymns to use

1 At the name of Jesus
ev'ry knee shall bow,
ev'ry tongue confess him
King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure
we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning
was the mighty Word.

2 At his voice creation
sprang at once to sight,
all the angel faces,
all the hosts of light,
cherubim in heaven,
stars upon their way,
all the heav'nly orders
in their great array.

3 Humbled for a season
to receive a name
from the lips of sinners
unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it
spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious
when from death he passed;

4 Bore it up triumphant
with its human light,
thro' all ranks of creatures
to the central height,
to the throne of Godhead,
to the Father's breast,
filled it with the glory
of that perfect rest.

5 In your hearts enthrone him;
there let him subdue
all that is not holy,
all that is not true;
crown him as your captain
in temptation's hour;
let his will enfold you
in its light and pow'r.

6 Christians, this Lord Jesus
shall return again
in his Father's glory,
with his angel train;
for all wreaths of empire
meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him
King of glory now.

Father, I love you
I praise you, I adore you

Glorify thy name in all the earth
Glorify thy name
Glorify thy name
Glorify thy name in all the earth

Jesus, I love you
I praise you, I adore you

Glorify thy name in all the earth
Glorify thy name
Glorify thy name
Glorify thy name in all the earth

Sermon - Adrian Morton
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 John 17:1-11
What is our unity based upon?

John 17 is Jesus' last extended dialogue before being arrested and eventually crucified.

He is praying to His Father.
Giving a summary of what he has done.
Praying for those He will be leaving.

If I knew that my next words would be among my last.
I would want to make my words count.

I would want to make sure that I leave them with something big.
Something that I didn't want them to forget, it was that important.

And I think Jesus was doing that here!

The goal of this prayer is that the disciples would have unity.
That they would be one.

This was Jesus's final Hope and Prayer for his disciples.
That despite all the trials and tribulations they would face.

They would remain unified, together.

That is the big theme.
That is what Jesus really wanted them to remember.
That is what He asks His Father for.

So in v11 Jesus prays

"Now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

Later, and you don't have this, in v20 Jesus again prays:

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one."

So the prayer is not only for the immediate disciples.

But for all who will follow Him.

That's you and me!

"that they may all be one."

<Now of course church history tells us that the church has really shot itself in the foot often... with so many splits and now thousands of denominations.

But Unity is so important that it is this that will witness to the world about Jesus.

After he had just prayed that they all be one he said in V23:

"I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

The unity between us.
The love we have for one another is the supreme witness to the world that the Father sent Jesus.

Unity is that important.

Its why when the church is characterised by bickering, or unforgiveness, or slander, or gossip it is such a big issue.

Because the world sees that... and thinks well why should I listen to their message.

If they can't even get on with themselves...

What is the basis, what is the foundation of our unity?

Or more accurately what do we think Jesus thought should be the foundation?

Well again in this prayer...

In v6 Jesus prays, "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me."

In other words, to summarise the second half of that.

The disciples have received and believed the truth that Father God has sent Jesus.

And this is of course key to unity.

We warm to those who have received and believe the truth about Jesus.

If a people are Jesus centred, and I would say have received and believe the truth of his crucifixion and resurrection.

You immediately have an affinity with.

But I think more than that is going on here. Jesus says, "I have made your name known to those who whom you gave me."

What does he mean by that?

In our culture our names are nice, but we don't often choose our names based on their meaning.

I know some parents get the baby names books out to find names they like.

But by and large we don't get big on a meaning of a name. That's not usually the deciding factor.

< Meaning of Adrian - Not brave warrior...
Not handsome Knight
But 'Dark One!'
Thanks parents!
>

Just knowing people's name is not the same as what Jesus was talking about here.

In Hebrew thought, to know someone's name was to know what that person was like.

Someone's name described who that person was, what he was like, it described the person's character.

E.g. In the OT the name Jacob means "deceiver" and that is what Jacob turned out to be. He deceived his brother Esau.

Later God renamed him, Israel, meaning "overcomer" because he struggled with God and overcame.

In the burning bush event, when Moses asked for God's name, God replied "I am who I am".

In other words "I am indescribable! My name is too big, too wonderful for you to cope with."

Because the name would describe the character of the person.

So here Jesus is praying that He has made the Father's character, who the Father really is known to His disciples.

A new intimacy has been revealed to them. The reality of the Father's love has been revealed to them.

A depth of relationship that the Father had with Jesus had been opened to them.

This is what Jesus was praying in this prayer.

"As you Father, are in me, and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe..."

What is our foundation for unity?

Yes, we need to have received and believe in Jesus.

But also we need to have had the Father's name, his character revealed to us.

And I know for myself that is who I warm to. Those who are Jesus centred but also those who have understood the message of the Father's love.

Those who have experienced the Father's love.

Your heavenly dad is my dad and my heavenly dad is your dad!

Often for churches we try and find unity in something other than these things.

Some churches try and build their unity on style of worship, or doctrine, or maintaining the building, or fundraising or whatever...

And its a fragile unity.

Or at least its the not the kind of unity Jesus was talking about.

The basis of our unity has to be because we are Jesus centred.

And we have understood and experienced the Father's love.

Take note of what it says in V26.

"I made your name known to them, ... so that the love with which you (Father) have loved me (Jesus) may be in them (the disciples)."

Most of us can receive quite easily that the Father must have a great love for His son Jesus.

Many of us can accept that Father God can love our neighbour, can love Adrian or Louise or someone else basically, with the same love as He has for Jesus!

A lot is us find it more hard to accept the Father loves us with the same love He has for Jesus.

But that is what it is saying here.

The same love the Father has for Jesus he has for us.

Often we will believe we are a special case. Somehow the Father just puts up with me. He's really a bit disappointed in me.

Yes he loves other people but just not me...

Its such a lie of the enemy

Its why I am so keen on encouraging us to be open to the Holy Spirit...

Why... because it is the Holy Spirit's job (or one of them) to reveal the Father's love to us.

Romans 8, "by the Spirit we cry Abba",
Daddy.

By the Spirit we cry 'Your dad is my dad' and my dad is your dad!

The basis of our unity has to be because we are Jesus centred.

And we have understood and experienced the Father's love.

If we try and build unity on anything other than these then it will be a fragile unity.

Amen.