

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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IN THE
FATHER'S NAME

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The profound prayer uttered by the Lord in John 17 is the completing prayer of the Lord's message given in chapters fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. The first part, verses 1 through 5, gives us the subject of the prayer, and the second part, verses 6 through 24, deals with oneness. The purpose of oneness is for the glorification of the Son that the Son may glorify the Father. The people in this oneness include all the disciples, all those whom God has chosen and given to the Lord Jesus, all those to whom the Lord has given eternal life.

THE BELIEVERS TO BE BUILT UP INTO ONE

In order to have oneness, there must be the building up. Without the building up, there is no oneness. Do not think that a piling up of materials is oneness. No, that is not oneness. Consider a house. There is a genuine oneness among all the materials in the house, and that oneness is the building up. Every piece of material has been fitly framed together. This is oneness. The

oneness that many Christians are talking about today is just a piling up. Sometimes, however, it is not even a piling up; it is a matter of one person who is far away from another saying, “We are one.” Brother Watchman Nee describes this kind of oneness as shaking hands over the fence. But the oneness today often is not even a shaking hands over the fence, but a begging of people who are far away from one another. One on the east coast may plead with one on the west coast to be one with him saying, “Dear brother, I am one with you.” The one on the west coast may reply, “Yes, I am one with you,” yet in his heart he says, “If we don’t keep a safe distance between us, we shall offend one another.”

If this is real oneness, where is the Body? The situation today is that the shoulder is afraid of the neck, wanting to keep a safe distance away from it. The eye is also afraid of the nose, saying, “Brother nose, you are too strong. I dare not stay with you. I want to be polite to you and nice to you, but I must keep a safe distance from you.” Most Christian workers are not willing to be one with others. Such a situation is not oneness. The genuine oneness is the building up. Look at the oneness of your physical body: that oneness is a matter of being built up. We all must see that

this building is what the Lord needs today. Two thousand years ago, the Lord said, “I come quickly” ([Rev. 22:20](#)). Two thousand years have passed, and still He has not come. Why? Because it is a shame for Him to come back without having a real building. There must be a small remnant which will respond to the Lord’s heart and be willing to lose their identification in order to be built up together as one. This will be a shame to the enemy. The enemy, Satan, hates this building. Thus, in [John 17](#), the Lord prayed for it.

In [verses 6 through 24](#) the Lord prayed for the believers to be built up into one. This oneness is in three stages: in the Father’s name by the eternal life ([vv. 6-13](#)); in the Triune God through sanctification by the holy word ([vv. 14-21](#)); and in the divine glory for the expression of the Triune God ([vv. 22-24](#)). Here we shall consider the first of these three stages.

IN THE FATHER’S NAME BY THE ETERNAL LIFE

The real oneness, the building up of the believers, is in the Father’s name by the eternal life. Eternal life is the reality of the Father’s name. The Father’s name is Father, and the reality of the Father is the divine life. This is even true with

respect to our physical father, for our physical father's reality is his life. If our father had no life to impart into us, he could never have been our father. My father is my father in reality because he has the life which has been imparted into me. The very life which has been imparted into me by him is the reality of his being my father. The word Father must not merely be a title; it must be a reality. The divine life, which is the eternal life, is the reality of the title Father.

THE FATHER

The Father is the source of life. This is indicated by the Lord's word in [John 5:26](#), which says, "The Father has life in Himself." In the entire Scripture, especially in the Gospel of John, the Father denotes the source of life. Even in a human family, the father is the source of life of that family. As the father of a family is the very source and origin of life, so the name Father reveals the Father as the source of life.

The Father, the source of life, is for the propagation and multiplication of life. The father of a human family, who is the source of the life of that family, is for the propagation of life. Although a man may be quite young, as long as he becomes a father with a source of life, he has

some propagation. Originally, a man might have been alone, but later he has four little ones. After getting married, this man's life, which is the father's life as the source of a family, begins to be propagated. As the propagation of life goes on, there is also the multiplication of life. The Father's life is for propagation and multiplication.

Of the Father, who is the source of life and who is for the propagation and multiplication of life, many sons are born to express Him ([John 1:12-13](#)). Therefore, we have propagation, multiplication, and expression. We have seen that this concluding prayer is the confirmation and strengthening of the foregoing message in [chapters fourteen through sixteen](#). In that message we saw the propagation of life and the multiplication of life for the expression of the Triune God. Now we have the same points in this concluding prayer: the Father is propagating, bringing forth, many sons for His expression.

The name Father is very much related to the divine life. Without having the divine life, God could never be the Father. How is it possible for a man to be a father? Only by his life. If you do not have life, you cannot be a father. A father is a producer. A father does not produce by manufacturing but by begetting. A father has a

begetting life. Without that life, a man has no reality of being a father. Remembering that the Father has the divine life for begetting, propagating, multiplying, and bringing forth many sons will help us to understand the Gospel of John much better. If a man is unable to beget children, he is not a father. The qualification of your being a father rests with your children. The more children you have, the greater you are as a father. Suppose a man could have a hundred children. He would certainly be the greatest father on earth, for he would have such a rich life in begetting. Consider how many children our Father has. He not only has hundreds of children but millions of them. What a great Father He is! What propagation of life there is with Him.

Whenever we call Him Father, we must understand that this title is realized by His divine life. Without His divine life, the name Father is merely an empty term without content or reality. Since the reality of the title Father is the divine life, to say that we are one in the name of the Father means that we are one in the divine life.

THE FATHER'S NAME

In [verse 6 of John 17](#) the Lord said to the Father, “I have manifested Your name to the men

whom You gave Me out of the world.” The name referred to here is the very name Father. The names God and Jehovah were adequately revealed to man in the Old Testament, but not the name Father. In Old Testament times, God’s people mainly knew that God was Elohim, that is, God, and Jehovah, that is, the ever-existing One, but they did not know much about the title Father. God is His name for creation, and Jehovah is His name for the relationship between Himself and man. The first chapter of Genesis reveals the name God, but it does not disclose the name Jehovah. It was not until the second chapter of Genesis, when God was about to establish a relationship with man, that He revealed the name Jehovah.

While the names God and Jehovah are fully revealed in the Old Testament, the name Father is not fully revealed. It is only slightly mentioned in such places as [Isaiah 9:6](#); [63:16](#); and [64:8](#). What is the revelation behind the name Father? Father is the name for the relationship of life. When I say, “my Father,” I mean that I have His life and that I was born of Him. The Old Testament does not unfold the revelation that God is a begetting Father who will regenerate countless persons. It is in the New Testament that the Lord reveals God

as the Father who regenerates many sons. He is the source of life; hence, He is the Father. It is His intention to bring forth innumerable sons by regenerating them with His life. God is the Father because He begets many people with His life, making them His children and His sons. In the book of Matthew the Lord taught His disciples to call God Father, saying, “Our Father Who is in the heavens” ([Matt. 6:9](#)). When we call God our Father, we must realize that He is our genuine Father. He is not our father-in-law, and we are not His adopted children. Our Father is our Father in life, our genuine Father. We call Him Father because we were born of Him and have His life.

How sweet it is to call God our Father! Both [Romans 8:15](#) and [Galatians 4:6](#) speak of crying, “Abba, Father.” Throughout the world, little children use a double title, such as Papa, or Mama, when addressing their parents. To say Pa or Ma is not very intimate. But Papa or Mama is intimate. Among every race the children call their fathers Papa, Baba, or something similar. If I were not born of my father, yet I had to call him Papa, it would be very awkward. It would even be awkward to address your father-in-law in this way. It would not be so sweet.

One day a newly-saved person came to Brother

Nee and asked him why Romans 8:15 and 16 say that crying, “Abba, Father,” is a witness that we are the children of God. Brother Nee immediately asked this young brother if he was married. When he replied that he was, Brother Nee said, “When you first visited your wife’s parents after you were married, what did you call your father-in-law?” The young brother answered, “In a very reluctant way I called him Papa.” Then Brother Nee inquired, “When you are calling your own father, do you address him in such a reluctant way?” The brother said, “Certainly not. When I call upon my father, it is so sweet.” When Brother Nee asked him why he called his wife’s father Papa reluctantly, he said, “Because he is not my father.” Then Brother Nee said, “That’s right. He’s not your father. So it’s really difficult to call him Papa. God is not your father-in-law; He is your Father, your Father in life.” Because God is our Father in life, it is so sweet to call upon Him, saying, “Abba, Father.” When you sense this sweetness, you know that you are His child and that He truly is your Father in life.

Christ came as the Son of God in the Father’s name (John 5:43) and worked in the Father’s name (10:25). “In the Father’s name” means in the reality of the Father. As the Son is one with

the Father (10:30), so He came and worked in the Father's name, that is, in the Father's reality.

As the Son is one with the Father, so, when He was with the believers, He manifested the Father to them in what the Father is. When they saw Him, they saw the Father (14:9). The Father is expressed in Him.

In 17:26 the Lord said, "And I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known." In what way did the Son make the Father's name known to the believers? It was not by teaching but by imparting life into the disciples. The best way to make a father known to a little boy is to impart that father's life into the boy. It is much more difficult for an adopted son to know his father than it is for a son who is actually born with a certain man's life. We have the Father's life. Because we are the same in life and nature as the Father is, it is easy for us to know Him. As the Son of the Father, the Lord Jesus came to impart life into us. Since the Father's life has been imparted into us, spontaneously the Father is made known to us by life, not by teaching. In life we know the Father.

THE FATHER'S WORD AND THE FATHER'S WORDS

Verse 6 says, "They have kept Your word," and

[verse 8](#) says, “For the words which You gave Me I have given to them, and they received them.” In these verses we see in the Greek that the Father has two kinds of words: *logos*, the constant word, in [verse 6](#) and *rhema*, the instant words, in [verse 8](#). Both the *logos* and the *rhema* are used by the Lord to impart eternal life to the believers. The *logos*, the constant word, is always the same. The written word in the Bible is the *logos*. But when you read the *logos*, the Spirit will use a sentence, a phrase, or even a single word to inspire you, and that word will become the instant word. Take the example of [John 3:16](#). As the written word in the Bible, [John 3:16](#) is the *logos*. One day, as you read this verse, the written word becomes the instant word. Suddenly the words, “God so loved the world,” stand out, and you say, “Oh, God so loved me!” By this we see how the constant word becomes the instant word, how the *logos* becomes the *rhema*.

Both the constant word and the instant word, the *logos* and the *rhema*, are for imparting eternal life into the believers who receive these words. The Father’s words are not mainly for teaching or instruction; they are mainly for imparting life into the believers. When the words, “God so loved the world,” stood out to you and you were

inspired, saying “Praise God, You loved me,” life was immediately imparted into you. You received the Father’s life. The Father’s life is the Father’s reality. When we have the life of the Father, we also have the Father and enjoy the Father. Where is the Father? The Father is in His life, for His divine life is the reality of the name Father.

When we received the word of God, we were regenerated by that word ([1 Pet. 1:23](#)) and became the sons of God. In this way, God became our Father and we became the sons of God. The Lord came to reveal to His disciples that God is the Father, the source of life, who intends to bring forth countless sons. Therefore, the Lord brought the word of God to His disciples, who, by receiving the word, became the reborn sons of God. They became the sons of God, and God became their Father. Consequently, they have the name of the Father. Now they can call God their Father because they have the life of God which makes them the children of God.

KEPT IN THE FATHER’S NAME

In [verse 11](#) of [John 17](#) the Lord said, “And I am no longer in the world, and they are in the world; and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name which You have given Me, that they

may be one even as We are.” To be kept in the Father’s name is to be kept by His life, because only those who are born of the Father and have the Father’s life can participate in the Father’s name. The Son has given the Father’s life to those whom the Father has given Him ([v. 2](#)). They share the Father’s name by being kept in it, and they are one in it. Hence, the first aspect of oneness is the oneness in the Father’s name by His divine life.

The Son’s believers are still in the world. They need to be kept, that is, separated, from the world that they might be sanctified, made holy. In [verse 11](#) the Son prays that the Father, who is holy, will do this.

In [verse 11](#) the Lord addresses His Father as “Holy Father.” The Father’s life is a holy life, a life that is separated from the world. Although we have this life, if we stay far away from the Holy Father, we shall have problems. We all need to be kept in the Father’s name by the life of the Holy Father.

ONE IN THE FATHER’S NAME

All the Three of the Triune God are one. That is the real oneness and that must be the pattern of our oneness. The Three of the Triune God are

one in the divine life, in the divine nature, and in the divine glory. We, the many sons of God, must also be one in the divine life, in the divine nature, and in the divine glory. We must be one in the same way as the Three of the Triune God are.

The believers are one in the Father's name by the eternal life. To be one in the Father's name is not to be kept in oneness by means of a title. Suppose there are five brothers in the flesh. They were all born of one father and have the same life. The life which they have received from their father is the reality of their father. Their father is real to them because they have his life. Perhaps these brothers are unhappy with one another and despise one another. What should they do? Should they separate and be divided? No, although they are unhappy with one another and may despise one another, deep within them is something that holds them together and causes them to say, "Brothers, we have one father and should not be divided. We must be one." In this way they are kept in oneness in the name of their father. Actually, however, they are kept by the father's life. Although they may be unhappy with one another and may desire to separate, the life of their father within them joins them together. Deep within, they love one another. Whenever

one of them is attacked, the others stand as one to fight against the attacker. Likewise, the Father's name, the reality of which is the Father's life, keeps His children one.

However, if the Father's children allow their mentality to overcome and overshadow their inner life, they will be divided. The Father's life unites them and keeps them in oneness, but their mentality divides them. Christians today are divided by their big mentality. While their mentality is overdeveloped, their stature in life is that of a dwarf. The more developed you are in your mentality, the more you are a dwarf as far as life is concerned. This overdevelopment of the mentality is the cause of division. If we allow the inner life to develop, we shall all be united in the life of the Father. If we stay in the Father's life, we shall all be one.

Any person in a local church who considers himself quite smart in his mentality will be a main cause of division. Never consider yourself smart in your mentality. You must fear your smart mind just as you fear the poison of the serpent. Oh, how we need to be kept in the Father's life! Many brothers in the flesh love one another, not according to the outward condition but according to their inward blood. I had four brothers.

Although we sometimes fought with each other, whenever someone tried to injure us, we were immediately united because we were of one blood. Likewise, the life of the Father, which is the reality of genuine oneness, unites us. Do not care for your likes or dislikes. Your feelings may cause you to be unhappy with me, and my temper may cause me to be unhappy with you. But we must forget about such things and take care of the inner life. Deep within, you have the Father's life, and I have it too. We all have the Father's life, and by the eternal life of our Father we are one.

We are one in the Father's name by enjoying the Father Himself. As the children of God, we all have the same Father. But when we are not one with one another, we do not have the sense that we are enjoying the Father. The more we are one by His life, the more we have the sense that the Father is so enjoyable. When we are together calling, "O Father," it is so sweet. Suppose, however, we fight and are divided into many groups. In such a situation, when we try to call, "O Father," we lose the sense of the sweetness of the Father's name. The sweet flavor of the Father's name relies upon the oneness of His children. When we are one, we enjoy the Father.

The first aspect of oneness, which is the

building up of the believers, is the oneness in the Father's name by His divine life. In this aspect of oneness the believers born of the Father's life enjoy the Father's name, that is, the Father Himself, as the factor of their oneness. We are one because we have one Father. We not only have one God but one Father. This sweet title, Abba Father, has been made fully known to us in an experiential way because we have His life. Now we are one in Him by His life.

The first ground and reason for our oneness is that we all are sons of God having the same divine life and that God is the Father of us all. Because God is your Father and mine, we are of the same family, the family of God. You may be an American and I am a Chinese, yet we can call one another brother. This is so dear and intimate. In fact, I do not sense such an intimacy with my own brother in the flesh. The Lord can testify this for me. Why is this true? Because we were all born of the same Father, have the same life, and are brothers in that life. We are not brothers-in-law—we are brothers in life. Praise the Lord that we are brothers in the Father's life! For this reason, we must be one. There is no reason for us not to be one, for we are one family having the same Father and the same life. Therefore, we

have the real brotherhood in life. In this life we all must be and can be one.

In verse 13 the Lord said to the Father, “But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world that they may have My joy made full in themselves.” The fullness of joy is in the real oneness. When we are one in the Father’s name by the Father’s life, enjoying the Father together, we shall have the Lord’s joy made full in us. This is the reason that when we are truly one, we are filled with praises to the Father. This praise is simply the overflow of the inner joy. We rejoice in oneness with the overflow of joy.

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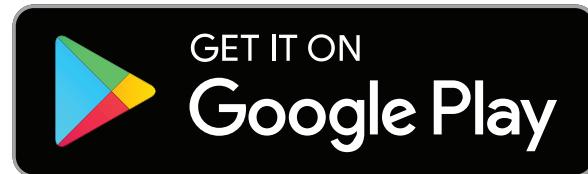
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