

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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PRAYER

FOR
ONENESS

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LIFE'S PRAYER FOR ONENESS

In chapter seventeen of the Gospel of John the Lord prayed that God would glorify Him so that God might be glorified in and through Him. The words, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You” (17:1), are the subject of this prayer. How was the Son of God glorified so that God the Father might be glorified in and through the Son? It was by the resurrection which follows death. After His death the Lord was resurrected, meaning that He was manifested and glorified. The Lord was released and manifested by resurrection; hence, He was glorified. When the Lord was thus glorified, the Father was glorified in and through the Son.

The Son was glorified in His resurrection. Now in what way will the Son be glorified today so that the Father might be glorified in and through the Son? It is by the church. When the church has been regenerated, sanctified, crucified, and united with Christ in glory, then the Son of God will be expressed and manifested. The Son of God will be glorified in the oneness

of the church. The Son of God being thus glorified, the Father at that time will also be glorified in and through the Son. Therefore, the prayer, “Glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You,” includes and depends upon the matter of the church being regenerated, sanctified, crucified, and united in oneness with the Son of God.

ONENESS IN THE DIVINE LIFE

The Lord’s prayer in [John 17](#) unfolds three stages of oneness. Let us pay careful attention to the verses in [John 17](#) that are concerned with oneness. [Verse 11](#) says, “Holy Father, keep them in Your name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.” We see here that oneness is a matter of being kept in the Father’s name. The reality of the Father’s name is the Father’s divine life. Hence, the first factor of genuine oneness is the Father’s name with the Father’s divine life. This is the life mentioned in [17:2](#), where the Lord said to the Father that He had given the Son “authority over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom You have given Him.” We must take care of these two verses in order to see the first main factor of genuine oneness.

ONENESS IN THE HOLY WORD

John 17:21 is a wonderful, deep, and profound verse. “That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me.” The oneness in this verse is the oneness in the Triune God. When we all are in the Triune God, we have oneness. How can we be in the Triune God? Only through Christ’s death and resurrection. This is the reason why the Lord told us in chapter fourteen that He had to go in death and come in resurrection. It was through death and resurrection that His disciples were brought into the Triune God. In the Triune God is the real, genuine oneness. We must take John 17:17 and 18 along with verse 21. “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.” In verse 17 we have the sanctifying word. Although we are in the Triune God, we may slip out of the Triune God into the world. Thus, we need the sanctifying word to separate us from the world back to the Triune God. Therefore, the second factor of genuine oneness is in the Triune God through sanctification by the holy word.

ONENESS IN THE DIVINE GLORY

The third factor of oneness is found in [verse 22](#). “And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one.” The third factor of genuine oneness is glory—in the divine glory for the expression of the Triune God. Since the glory which the Father has given to the Son has been given to us by the Son, genuine oneness is in the divine glory. What is glory? Glory is the sonship given to the Son by the Father with the Father’s divine life and nature to express the Father in His fullness. Notice that there are four aspects of glory: sonship, the Father’s life, the Father’s divine nature, and the expression of the Father in His fullness. These four things together equal the glory. This is the glory, which is a divine right and privilege, that we have in the Son. The Father has given this glory to the Son, and the Son is privileged to express the Father in this way. This is the very glory which has been given to us by the Son. Today we all have the sonship with the Father’s life and nature to express the Father in all His fullness in the Son. We need to become very familiar with these points, for it is in this divine glory that we are truly one.

Verse 23 continues, “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.” Here we see that being perfected into oneness still pertains to being in the Father and in the Son. If we take care of all these verses, then we shall be able to see real oneness.

In verse 24 the Lord said, “Father, I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me, for You have loved Me before the foundation of the world.” The Lord was in the divine glory and prayed that all whom the Father had given Him would also be with Him in glory. We need to pay close attention to the tenses of some of the verbs in this verse. Here it does not say that they “shall be with Me” or that “they shall behold My glory.” According to the natural, religious concept, glory is in the future, in “the sweet by-and-by.” According to this concept, in “the sweet by-and-by” the glory will shine and we all shall come into that shining and be in glory. But the Lord Jesus did not use the future tense, but the present tense, saying, “I desire that those whom You have given Me may also be with Me where I am, that they may

behold My glory.” The Lord said, “may also be,” and, “may behold My glory.” Being with the Lord in glory and beholding His glory are not for “the sweet by-and-by”; we may experience them today. The Lord seemed to be telling the Father, “Father, You have given Me Your glory, the sonship with the divine life and nature to express You and Your fullness. This is the glory which You have given Me, and I am now in this glory. But those whom You have given Me are not yet in this glory. I pray that they also may be in this glory.” When was this prayer answered? Firstly, it was answered on the day of resurrection and secondly, on the day the church was raised up. When the church was raised up, all the disciples were brought into that same glory, into the sonship with the divine life and the divine nature to express God the Father in the Son in all His fullness. Hallelujah, we all are in glory with the Son! The Son has the sonship with the divine life and the divine nature to express the Father, and we also have this. Thus, we are now where the Son is—in glory. By this we see that real oneness is in the Triune God through the process of the death and resurrection of the Son.

The first stage of oneness is the oneness of life, the second stage is the oneness of sanctification,

and the third stage is the oneness in the glorification of the Triune God. The last stage, the glorification of the Triune God, is simply the manifestation of the Triune God, that is, the glory of sonship. When we come together realizing that we have been regenerated, sanctified, and crucified, then we are one to express God, to manifest God, and to be perfected into the glorification of the Triune God.

By applying these three stages, we can discover which stage we are in. In which stage are you—the first, second, or third? Are you simply one in life, or do you have the higher oneness in sanctification, or the highest oneness in the glorification of the Triune God? Not all of us are in the same stage. Some are in the first, others are in the second, and a few, by the Lord's mercy, are in the third. As long as you have been saved and born again, you have the Father's life and the Father's name. Thus, you are the Father's child and are one with all other Christians who also are the Father's children. Hence, you are one in life. But you also need to be sanctified by the word in order to be separated from the worldly things and live in God. Then you will be one with the saints in the second stage. Finally, you need to realize the crucifixion of the cross in order to

live in the glorification of the Triune God. This means that you must deny yourself, live in the manifestation of the Triune God, and be perfected into the oneness of the glorification of the Triune God. As we have seen, this is the ultimate step of oneness.

It is only in the third stage of oneness that the Lord's prayer will be fulfilled. Only in this stage will the Son of God be glorified that the Father may be glorified in and through the Son. It is only in this stage that we shall glorify the Lord and manifest the Lord in oneness. In this stage we shall be absolutely perfected into oneness to manifest and glorify the Lord. Then we shall realize the sonship because all that God is and has will be embodied in us. This means that we shall have the life of God, the nature of God, and even God Himself for the purpose of becoming the very manifestation and expression of God. Finally, we shall have the full glory which God has given to the Lord as the Son of God.

ONENESS BEING THE BUILDING

True oneness is also the building. Do not think that this is my concept or that it is not supported by the revelation in the Bible. Through the type of the tabernacle in the Old Testament

we can see that oneness is the building. The mutual abode revealed in John 14 was typified, pictured, and portrayed by the tabernacle. If you are not clear about the mutual abode in John 14, you need to go back to Exodus 26 to see the composition and the building up of the tabernacle.

Every careful reader of the Bible knows that the tabernacle was not only God's dwelling place but also the dwelling place of those who served God. Those who served God dwelt in the tabernacle. Many times in the Psalms the psalmist prayed that he would abide in the temple, in the house of God. For example, Psalm 27:4 says, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." By this we can see that the temple or the tabernacle was not only God's dwelling place but also the dwelling place of those who loved God. Thus, it was a type of the mutual dwelling place, the mutual abode.

The tabernacle was composed of forty-eight boards. This is very meaningful. Since this is a type, we need to allegorize every aspect of it. Those forty-eight boards were composed with the basic number six. The number six, as the

number of the six stone water pots in [John 2](#), signifies man who was created on the sixth day. Hence, the number six is the number of humanity, the number of man. Forty-eight divided by six is eight, which in the Bible denotes resurrection, a new beginning. The first day of the week, following the seven days of the previous week, is the eighth day and signifies a new beginning. When was circumcision conducted? On the eighth day ([Lev. 12:3](#)). When was the Lord Jesus resurrected? On the first day of the week, that is, on the eighth day ([John 20:1](#)). Hence, the number eight signifies a new beginning in resurrection, and the number forty-eight signifies humanity in resurrection. This is not the natural humanity but the resurrected humanity. In the church there is the need of humanity, but this should be the resurrected humanity, not the natural humanity.

The forty-eight wooden boards signifying humanity were overlaid with gold ([Exo. 26:29](#)). Gold signifies divinity including the divine nature and the divine glory. Thus, the gold overlaying the forty-eight boards in the tabernacle signifies the divine essence with the divine glory. Upon the overlaying gold were the golden rings, and within the golden rings were the golden

uniting bars that united the forty-eight boards. Here we have oneness, the oneness that is the building. Therefore, we can say that the building is the oneness.

In the Bible, oneness is not just a matter of putting things together. Merely putting things together is not oneness; that is just a piling up. Oneness is the building together. In order to be built together, many pieces are not only put together but are fitly framed together to form one unit. Take the example of a house: every part of it is fit together to form one unit. Through the example of the type of the tabernacle we can see that the forty-eight boards became one building.

This oneness, this building, in the tabernacle was altogether dependent upon the gold. If the gold was removed from the forty-eight boards, the oneness would have been lost, and the forty-eight boards would have fallen apart. In themselves, the wooden boards did not possess the uniting factor or the uniting element. That uniting element was the gold. The gold overlaid the boards, on the overlaying gold were the golden rings, and within the golden rings were the golden uniting bars. Hence, it was in the gold that all the boards could be one. It is in the

divine life, the divine nature, and the divine glory, not in the humanity, that all the “boards” are one. Although we are the boards in resurrection, this resurrected humanity is not the uniting factor; the uniting factor is the divinity, the gold. The divine life, nature, and glory are the uniting factor. Likewise, our oneness is not in ourselves but in the Triune God who is our life, nature, glory, and expression. Eventually, we, like the forty-eight boards in the tabernacle, do not express ourselves but the glory of the Triune God as typified by the gold. Now we can see that the forty-eight boards are one in the divine glory, expressing the glory of the gold. This is real oneness. It is so clear that this oneness is not just a togetherness but the building. Togetherness is not adequate to have genuine oneness. This oneness must be the building.

When we come to the end of the Bible, we have the harvest of God’s building work through the ages—the New Jerusalem, the ultimate consummation of God’s building enterprise. Is the oneness of the New Jerusalem a pile of precious stones? No, it is a building up. The appearance of the New Jerusalem is that of jasper ([Rev. 21:10-11, 18a](#)). In [Revelation 4](#) we see that the appearance of God, the One sitting on

the throne, is also that of jasper, meaning that jasper is God's expression, God's appearance. Therefore, the whole New Jerusalem will have the same appearance as God; it will express God. This means that all the precious stones are one in the expression of God's image. This is real oneness.

Some Christians say that every local church should be distinct, being different from all the other local churches. I was deceived by this concept for a number of years. But one day the Lord showed me that while the seven churches in Revelation were distinct, they were distinct in a negative way, not in a positive way. In their negativeness, some of those seven churches were different from the others, but in their positivity, they were all the same. Look at the four sides of the New Jerusalem. According to the opinion of those who say that each local church should be distinctly different, the four sides of the New Jerusalem should also be different. One side should be jasper, and the others ruby, emerald, or diamond, each having its own distinction. According to those who hold this opinion, each side of the wall should express something unique, something different from the others. But that is not oneness. All four sides of

the New Jerusalem have the same expression—the expression of jasper, the glorious appearance of God.

In the New Testament, the distinction between the churches is not on the positive side but on the negative side. Some may say, “Were not the churches established by Paul in the Gentile world of one kind and the churches in Judea, especially the church in Jerusalem, of another kind?” This is true, but only in a negative sense, not in a positive sense. In the positive sense, all the churches believed in Jesus Christ and had Christ as their life to express God. On the positive side, there was no difference between them. However, on the negative side there was a difference because the Gentile churches knew nothing about keeping the law, while the saints in Judea, especially some in the church in Jerusalem, still practiced the rituals of the Jewish religion, even up to the time of Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem. That was a real distinction among the churches. Do you want to keep this kind of distinction? The saints in Jerusalem even convinced Paul to pay the charge for purification in the Jewish religious way, but God did not agree with that. Yes, there were distinctions between the churches, but only in a negative sense.

Shall we keep the negative distinctions, or shall we go on to keep the positive oneness? All the churches must be the same. We have one Bible, we believe in one God, we have the same one Jesus Christ as our Savior, and we all enjoy Him as our life to express God. There is no reason to be different. If we still maintain the differences, it means that we are negative. All the forty-eight boards in the tabernacle expressed the glory of the same gold, and the entire wall of the New Jerusalem will have the appearance of jasper. How happy we are that all the churches today are the same positively. We must forsake the traditional concept that the churches should be different. All the churches must be the same.

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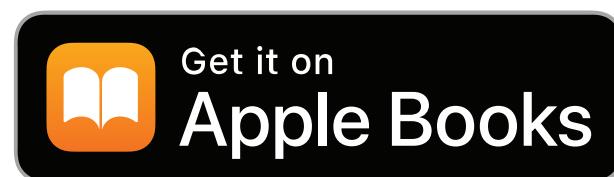
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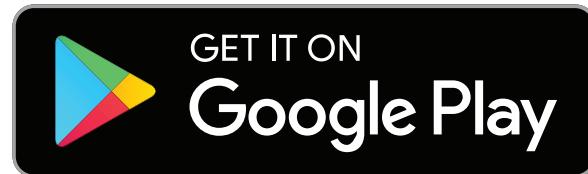
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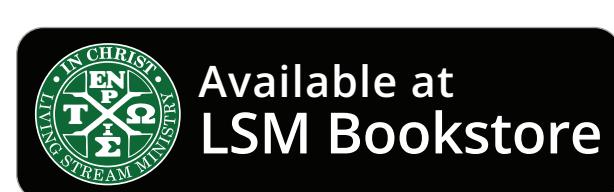
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