

# EXALTING CHRIST . . . THE LAMB OF GOD

## When Jesus Prayed for You

John 17:20–26

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Take a moment to think about Jesus, God's Son, praying for you to the Creator of the universe! The One who knows you in the most intimate ways—your thoughts, affections, fears, and deepest longings of your heart—speaks your name to His Father in heaven (Psalm 139). Such a thought ought to cause each of us to pause and offer a prayer of praise and thanksgiving to Him. Before starting this study, take a few moments to offer praise to the Lord in quiet prayer.



### YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

One of the best ways to begin Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* process is to read through the entire passage before beginning your study. In this case, John 17:20–26 contains a portion of a prayer Jesus prayed prior to His suffering and death. Not only will we examine how Jesus prayed for His disciples but also how He prayed for “all who will ever believe” in Him (John 17:20)! Read John 17:20–26. As you do, write down those things Jesus asked the Father to give His disciples as well as anyone who will believe His message.



### Observation: Looking at Jesus' Prayer

Taking time to look closely at repeated words and phrases (even concepts) helps you build an understanding of the overall meaning of a passage of Scripture. Jesus' prayer was filled with rich phrases and repeated ideas, beautifully woven

## Quotable

*In the bruised,  
hunchback, broken  
fashion of our lives,  
we do our best. And  
then we stumble  
and make a mess of  
things, as it were.  
The Lord Jesus  
says, “No, you're  
Mine. I'm proud  
of you. I love you.”  
This great prayer  
shows us that love.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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together like a tapestry. Read again John 17:20–26, and jot down any patterns you notice. (HINT: Watch for big ideas and connected relationships between individuals and outcomes.) Then answer the following observation questions.

In John 17:20–26, Jesus prayed all His followers would experience three specific things.

1. He prayed for the unity of believers (John 17:20–23). Find the ways Jesus described this unity, and write them below.

What did Jesus say is to be the purpose of unity between all believers (17:21)?

2. He prayed for the destiny of all believers (17:24). According to Jesus, what is the basis for the destiny of all those who follow Him?



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3. He prayed for an experience of relational love among all who follow Him (John 17:25–26). What is the basis of believers' love for one another, according to Jesus?

Often during the *Searching the Scriptures* process, the Holy Spirit will prompt you to pray about something related to what you're studying . . . or you may feel compelled to pause and offer a word of thanksgiving or praise to the Lord. Take a moment to express something specific by way of response to the Lord based on what you've studied so far.

*Dear Lord, I give You thanks for:*



### **Interpretation: Understanding the Purpose of Jesus' Prayer**

Embedded in Jesus' personal and powerful prayer for His disciples are some major theological truths. One major idea is that the Father loves the Son, the Son loves us, and based on that amazing relationship we are compelled to love one another.

How does God's love for the Son serve as a foundation for all other loving relationships in the body of Christ—the church?



What is the significance of Jesus praying for unity and mutual love to be experienced among all believers everywhere?

In what ways does the love of the Father for the Son, the love of the Son for His followers, and the love of believers for one another become a powerful witness to an unbelieving world (John 17:25–26)?



### **Correlation: How Does It Relate?**

Correlating the Scripture passages you're studying with other biblical passages helps you fine-tune your interpretation. The ramifications of Jesus' powerful prayer on behalf of His disciples continued throughout the beginning of the church and are reflected in the epistles of the apostles. Read a few examples below, and write a sentence or two about how each relates to Jesus' prayer.

Romans 12:9–11

Galatians 6:2



Jesus’ prayer in John 17 is an example of intercessory prayer. The four other categories of prayer are confession, praise, thanksgiving, and petition. Study Chuck’s chart below and compare the five categories of prayer, noting the many scriptural passages that illustrate each category. Also, read Chuck’s explanation of our role in prayer, Christ’s role, and the results of prayer.

**The Christian and Prayer**

Every believer is a priest (1 Peter 2:5, 9). Being a set-apart body of priests, we are qualified to represent ourselves to God by direct access (Hebrews 4:16). Our approach to the Father is through Jesus Christ, the Son (1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1). He serves as our Mediator, our personal go-between, as we exercise our priestly function.

In prayer, there are at least five specific categories to remember and employ:

Confession	Praise	Thanksgiving	Intercession	Petition
Claiming forgiveness on the merits of Christ’s blood at the cross	Expressing glory and adoration to the Godhead	Acknowledging, with gratitude, God’s provision on our behalf	Upholding others who are in need	Representing our own needs and requests
Psalm 32:5; 51:1–3; 66:18; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:5–9	1 Chronicles 29:10–12; Psalm 107:8; 150; Hebrews 13:15; Revelation 4:10–11; 5:12–14	Psalm 103:1–8; Ephesians 5:20; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:18	1 Samuel 12:23; John 17:20–26; Acts 12:5; 1 Timothy 2:1–2	Job 5:8–9; Jeremiah 33:3; Matthews 7:7–8; 21:22; 2 Corinthians 12:7–9; Hebrews 4:14–16; James 1:5–8

Since praying results in abundant joy (John 16:24), inner peace (Philippians 4:7), stability—“mercy” and “grace”—(Hebrews 4:16), the Father being glorified (John 14:13), and lives being altered (James 5:16), we dare not neglect this essential part of the Christian life. The simple fact is: “You do not have because you do not ask” (James 4:2 NASB).

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What main principle can you glean from this brief study on prayer?

### **Application: Truth Alive in Us**

Three specific applications emerge from John 17:20–26.

#### **To Grow in Unity as Believers Means *Giving In***

Our love for one another guards us against focusing on petty issues that cause division and strife and refocuses us on meeting the needs of others.

List at least three ways you can promote a deeper unity among believers in your congregation or small group through tangible acts of love.

1.

2.

3.

#### **To Know Your Destiny Means *Giving Up***

Knowing our eternal future is certain because of Jesus' work frees us to give up the futile attempts to control everything in our lives and in the lives of those we love.



List two areas of your life that you need to *give up* control of and surrender to Jesus.

- 1.
- 2.

### To Show Christ's Love Means *Giving Out*

Jesus demonstrated His limitless love for us when He emptied Himself, took on humanity, and suffered and died for us on the cross. That meant total self-denial. That's what our love for others should look like too.

Write three ways you can show sacrificial love to those in your family or fellow believers in your local church.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



### A FINAL PRAYER

*Thank You, Father, not only for loving Your Son, Jesus, but for hearing His prayer for me! Thank You for showing such love for me by sending Jesus to rescue me from my sinful, selfish ways. Fill me with the Spirit of Your Son and with His unending love. And shape me into an open vessel from which His love can be poured out on those around me. In Jesus' name, amen.*



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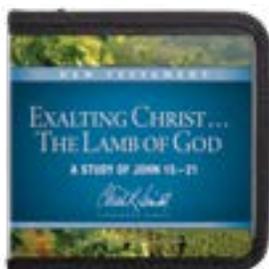
John 17:20–26

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

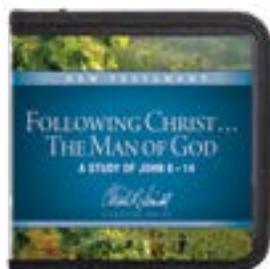
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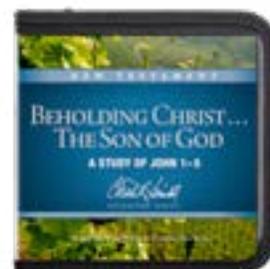
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For the 2018 broadcast, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Mark Tobey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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