

Privileged to Serve

Morning Worship

Announcements: Sibio Farrington

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Opening Prayer: Tyler Christian

Lord's Table:
Presiding: Ben Grant

Assisting: Luka Herrera
David Inman

Sermon: Byran Hatcher

Closing P.: Byran Hatcher

Those serving Wednesday

Teacher: Byran Hatcher

Announcements: Byran Hatcher

Devotional: Julius Cook

Song Leader: Chad Futrell

Closing Prayer: Barry Hatcher

Pantry Item
Bottled Water

Sermon Notes *Be Acceptable To God*

I. _____ *the Word*

II. *Meditate on His* _____

III. _____ *the Way*

May 24, 2026

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Welcome!

Cape Fear
Church of Christ

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Fayetteville, NC
28304

Phone:
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Website:
capefearcoc.org
Find us on
Facebook!
Sermons are
archived on our
YouTube page!

Service Times

Sunday:
B. C. 9:00am
Worship 10:00am

Wednesday Night:
B. C. 7:00pm

Ladies' Class:
Tuesdays 10:00am

Elders
Wade Hedgepeth
Byran Hatcher

The Cape Fear Crier

“Cry aloud and shout...for great in the midst of thee is the Holy One of Israel.” Isaiah 12:6

Jesus Prays for Unity

The longest recorded prayer of Jesus is found in John 17. That chapter records the prayer that Jesus prayed just after He had instructed His apostles about the coming Comforter or Holy Spirit (John 14-16), and just before He went with the eleven to the Garden of Gethsemane, where He was taken into custody (John 18). With the exception of the first part of verse one, the entirety of John 17 (26 verses in all) is a record of words which Jesus spoke to His heavenly Father.

It is His petition for *unity* or *oneness* among those who will believe in Him. What can we learn about this unity or oneness? In Jesus' words, we see the following:

1) The Lord's DESIRE for oneness. For whom is Jesus praying in this section? No longer for His apostles, but for those who would believe on Him through the word of the apostles. How can we be certain that Jesus really does desire oneness for such believers? Look at how His thought is repeated: “That they all may be one ... that they may be one ... that they may be made perfect in one” (17:21,22,23). The emphasis is not difficult to grasp: Jesus longs for unity. Any person or group of people that opposes true unity in the spiritual realm is against the expressed will of the Christ! If our King is “for” unity, then we must give all diligence to carry out the Bible's instruction “to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3).

2) The EXAMPLE of oneness. It is none other than the oneness of the Father and the Son. Jesus twice referred to His unity with the Father as the model for true oneness in the spiritual realm: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us...that they may be one, even as we are one” (17:21,22). Could there be a better example?

3) The BENEFIT of oneness. What possible good could come about as a result of Jesus' followers being united? Hear Him: “...that the world may believe that thou hast sent me...that the world may know that thou hast sent me...” (17:21,23). The unity of God's people

can be a strong force for evangelism. Why? Because it appeals to right-thinking people and can stir them to seriously consider what is so special about Christianity. When they investigate the Gospel with an honest and good heart, then they, too, will be moved to believe and obey it. Yes, unity is a definite plus for the Cause of Christ. Division and strife, on the other hand, can turn people off and hinder them from having interest in the Gospel. With that mindset, they will remain lost.

4) The MEANS of oneness. There it is in verse 20: “through their word.” How would people become believers in Jesus the Christ? Through the message of the apostles. Remember, faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; cf. John 20:30,31). “The apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42) is the same as the teaching of Christ. The apostles are not the source of the Word or Doctrine, but rather are simply its messengers. Through them, the Holy Spirit gave “all truth” to the world (John 16:13). So, how do people become believers in Jesus? Through the Word. How are people sanctified to the Lord?” Same answer, through the Word (17:17). And, how do we remain in fellowship with God? By abiding in that same Word (II John 9), ever walking in the light (I John 1:7). Thus, fellowship with God is achieved by obeying the Word; then that fellowship is maintained, as is unity among the saints, by abiding in His soul-saving Word. It is not mysterious or beyond our comprehension.

5) The IMPORTANCE of unity. This is evident when one considers the circumstances of this prayer; Jesus offered it on the night of His betrayal. His crucifixion was only hours away, and what was it that was on the Lord’s mind and lips? Unity. As we noted in our first point above, Jesus strongly desired this unity. Would that not also show its great importance?!

6) The POSSIBILITY of oneness. Some have concluded that it simply is not possible for spiritual unity to exist. They point to the vast divisions in the religious world, the division among those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and even the division that exists in the Lord’s church. Such absence of unity cannot be denied. Yet, the lack of the unity for which Christ prayed by no means warrants the conclusion that it is not possible to achieve and maintain true unity. If our Lord prayed for it, then it must be possible! Otherwise, His words about oneness offer only a false hope. If the Lord wants us to pray in harmony with the will of God (I John 5:14), then surely He Himself would not pray for something (unity) that is contrary to the Father’s will. If we or others are not scripturally united in our efforts to serve Jesus, such is not the Lord’s fault, nor does our division prove that His prayer for unity was a fantasy that cannot be fulfilled.

How wonderful is the thought that Jesus prayed for you and me on the night of His betrayal, when He was moving ever closer to the time that He would drink the ultimate cup of suffering. His prayer for unity, recorded in John 17:20-23, clearly shows the desire, example, benefit, means, importance, and possibility of unity.

- BTH

By the Numbers

Weekly Attendance for 5/17
Chapters Read: 523

B.C.: 26
Worship: 50

Daily Bible Readers: 16
Wednesday: 37

Family News and Notes

Frances Salaz passed away on Tuesday morning. **Ed Salaz** is recuperating from gall bladder surgery. **Linda Jenkins** is doing much better after her surgery. Jennifer’s coworker, **Nicole Jones**, is going through chemotherapy and family struggles. **Bethany McKinley** is due August 10, and it’s a girl! **Barbara Norris, Jeanette Freshley’s** mother, is struggling with her health. **Linda Jenkins’** son, **Shannon**, is struggling with mental health issues. **John McDougle, Geraldine Harrington’s** uncle, is not doing well. **Kim Perkins’** parents need prayers, and the family is experiencing significant stress.

Also remember: **Linda Boston, Vicky Carver, Wade & Sandra Hedgepeth, Barry & Melany Hatcher, Phil & Kathie Byrd, Margaret Mosley, Linda Hernandez,** and the **Davis** family.

Brother Hatcher will be going to Indonesia from June 9th to 25th. He will be teaching in the Bible college in Manado, preaching a gospel meeting, and speaking at the graduation ceremony.

Bible Reading Plan

May 24	May 25	May 26	May 27	May 28	May 29	May 30
Pg 590-593	Pg 593-597	Pg 597-600	Pg 600-606	Pg 606-610	Pg 610-614	Pg 614-618

Events

Memorial Day Cookout: Tomorrow at Lake Rim Park, 11:30-3. Bring food and games. Meat for burgers and hot dogs will be provided. Put your name on the sign-up sheet in the foyer. The picnic area is covered, so we will be there rain or shine.

Men’s Lunch: No Men’s lunch until August.

