

# The Seventh Sunday of Easter

**YOU ARE IN!**

**John 17:20-26**

**Seventh Sunday of Easter**

**Analysis by Paige G. Evers**

20 “I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23 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. 24 Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. 25 Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

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## **DIAGNOSIS: Fractured into Many**

**Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem)** – *Scattered in the World*

This intimate prayer that Jesus offers to his Father concludes the evening meal when Jesus ate with his disciples and washed their feet. After this prayer, Jesus is arrested and the events of his passion are set into motion. Earlier in the evening,

Jesus tells his disciples that even though they say that they believe he came from God and that they will defend him to others (16:30), their reaction to the events to come will prove otherwise. “The hour is coming, indeed it has come,” Jesus says, “when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone.” (16:32). Not only will the disciples flee from danger and from each other, but they will be forced to be on their own in “the world” where they will face persecution (16:33) and hatred (17:14).

### **Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) – Ignorance is Not Bliss**

But in Jesus’ prayer in 17:20-26, this same world receives his attention and intercession after he prays for himself (vv. 1-5) and his disciples (vv. 6-19). Jesus prays for the world because those in the world do not yet believe that the Father sent him (v. 21). They do not yet know that the Father loves them as he has loved Jesus (v. 23). Most of all, Jesus prays for the world because those in the world do not know the Father (v. 25). They do not have faith. Jesus asks the Father to act in a way that will bring the hostile world and the scattered disciples into a relationship with the Father and with the Son whom the Father has sent. Jesus prays that no one will be left outside the realm of divine love.

### **Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) – The Father is Righteous**

Throughout Jesus’ prayer in chapter 17, he addresses God as “Father” (vv. 1, 21, 24) and “Holy Father” (v. 11). Near the end of the prayer, Jesus calls upon God as “Righteous Father” and states, “the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me” (v. 25). God will act with justice once and for all to determine the eternal fate of those who do not know him and of those who reject him. In the same way, the Righteous Father will pour out his love upon those who know him

and come to him as the one who sent Jesus into the world.

## **PROGNOSIS: Drawn into One**

### **Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) – *The Cross Creates Unity***

The good news in this prayer is that both the world and the scattered disciples are not left on their own to withstand the Righteous Father's judgment. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, the Father and the Son share their mutual love with all who believe. Jesus prays, "the glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one" (v. 22). In John's Gospel, Jesus' glory is his passion (12:23, 17:1-5). When the Father glorifies Jesus on the cross and raises him from the dead, God gives the disciples and the world a new future. Jesus describes it this way in his prayer to the Father: "I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one" (v. 23). The believers' new relationship with the Father and the Son allows them to share in divine love and to be joined with other believers in perfect unity.

### **Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Internal Solution) – *Love Fills Fractured Hearts***

When Jesus' prayer is realized through the cross and resurrection, the disciples and those in the world have a new way of being. No longer are their lives and hearts marked by fractures, ignorance, or disbelief. The hearts of all are turned toward the lavish love of the Father. Jesus prays, "As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us" (v. 21). This connection, this being "in" the Father and the Son, means that the believer lives fully in God's love. Because Christ has been glorified, all believers now know that just as Jesus prayed, the Father has "loved them even as you have loved me" (v. 23).

### **Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) – *Unity Invites***

### *Others In*

The love and unity Jesus asks for in this prayer has a missional purpose. Jesus points to this mission when he prays, "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word" (v. 20). Jesus' certainty that his followers will help others come to faith extends into our time. When believers today share the good news of the gospel from person to person and from generation to generation they are enacting the love they have received from the Father and the Son. They are inviting others into that relationship of love. Jesus concludes his prayer with the assertion, "I made your name known to them, and I will make it known" (v. 26). Jesus will make the Father's name known through the faith, love, and unity lived out by his followers in every time and place so that others may come to believe and have eternal life.