

Leader's Guide

JESUS TEACHES US... ABOUT LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

February 11, 2007
John 17:1-26

LEADER'S GUIDE
for small group
discussion prepared
to aid you in digging
deeper and taking to
heart what we are
exploring on
Sunday mornings.



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Overview

Sadly, even those who desire to “walk with God,” sometimes end up going through the day with little intentionality. We just “do what we do” without much thought about the “why” or what the real “end point” is. But that is markedly different from what we see in Jesus’ prayer in John 17. He was clearly intentional; and it is something worth noting.

Walk it through

The opening question is not a reason to “beat up” on people for not living more intentional lives, but simply to highlight how little attention we give to intention. By and large, it seems that most people (even faithful Christians) give more attention to *what* they do in any given day than *why* they do it. As a result, we can get through a day without ever really consciously “doing the will of God.”

Jesus underscores His own commitment to intentional living in John 17:4, highlighting that as He comes to the end of His earthly ministry, He has accomplished everything the Father intended for Him to do.

As you read through the prayer, in these 26 verses over a dozen times, Jesus uses a Greek word that refers to purpose or intention. (The NASB renders the word as “that” or “so that” in every case; some translations don’t always pick up on this intentionality as clearly.) What does this mean? Only that Jesus was living with the Father’s plan and purpose in mind; Jesus lived (and prayed) with intention.

Although our personal God-given purpose is not identical to Jesus’, that He lived such a profoundly intentional life is a powerful example and a gracious call to us as well. If the Son lived for the Father’s purpose, we who are His children by adoption should do no less.

Discussion Guide

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Thinking it through . . .

Think back over the past few days. Reflect on what you did. As you think about what occupied your time and attention, did you end up doing what you did: 1) because you were really intentional about doing that, or 2) because, well, it’s just what sort of happened?

In the prayer Jesus offered as recorded in the “Upper Room Discourse,” He affirmed that He accomplished all the Father had given Him to do (17:4). What does that suggest about Jesus’ intentionality?

Take a few minutes and read through the prayer (John 17:1-26). As you do, pay attention to the “purpose statements” that Jesus makes. (That is, where He mentions the reason(s) He did or is doing what He does. Look for “so that” or “that” or “in order that” kind of language.)

What do you notice about Jesus’ reflection on His own life and His perspective on His prayer?

Jesus is not a *driven person*; we’ve all seen those kind of people. They are typically running ragged and running others ragged as well! But Jesus *does* live intentionally; He sees clearly the Father’s purpose for Himself . . . and He lives and prays in line with that.

What difference does this make?

How does it shape your relationship with Jesus to see Him as *intentional*?

How does Jesus’ intentionality stir you to live daily? What could change for you?