

Leader's Guide

JESUS TEACHES US... ABOUT LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

February 4, 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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864/234-7033

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Overview

When we think of God's love for us experienced and known through Jesus, we can sometimes slip into thinking that what Jesus did (and does) is because He is "making much" of us. But, if His prayer is any indication of what is of supreme importance to Him, it's clear that we are not the center of the target. Jesus' intention? That we "make much" of God.

Walk it through

We don't want to suggest that every reality show contest or American Idol candidate is steeped in selfishness, but our world seems to be caught up with the "what about me" mentality. And, that influences how we think about relationship with God and how we pray. If we think that God is primarily committed to "making much" of us, we will relate to Him one way; if we realize that He is most concerned about us "making much" of Him, we will relate entirely differently.

Jesus' prayer in John 17 gives us some insight into what was foremost on Jesus' heart. As He anticipated His death and departure from the world in the ascension, His primary concern in prayer was that God's glory would be seen and known! As you walk through the prayer, it's hard to miss that (as long as you're not caught up with looking for "what's in it for me!").

Ultimately, Jesus affirms that "eternal life" is to *know* God (17:3) and that must mean that we *see Him in His glory*. Life is not about God making much of us, but really about us making much of God.

So, are we really living the life Jesus intends? Is His prayer being answered in our lives? As we grow to be more and more captured by God's glory, the answer is a resounding "Yes!"

Discussion Guide

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Thinking it through . . .

There is a wide-spread phenomena here in America. It's seen in countless "reality" shows and "talent" searches. As you listen to the "next American Idol" speak about why he or she should be "chosen," at the heart of most of it is the thought that "it's all about me" (or, at least, it should be!). Where do you see that idea subtly influence your life?

How does the concern about "what about me" filter into the way you pray and what you ask of God?

Let's listen in as Jesus prays for you and me and all His followers in John 17. As you read the passage, pay particular attention to what ideas or thoughts are repeated.

What is the foundational or basic request Jesus makes (17:1)?

Where else is that request reflected in His prayer?

What is it that Jesus, ultimately, wants for His followers (17:24)?

How could you summarize what Jesus' overriding concern is in this prayer?

What difference does this make?

Are you caught up with the things Jesus prays for? Why or why not?

What would it look like for Jesus' prayer to be answered in your life?