

JESUS' LOVE SHOWS IN US
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

JOHN 17:20-26
MAY 8, 2016

²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may 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 to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

On this Mother's day, we note that praying for their children is one thing mothers do because they love them.

In text, Jesus prays for disciples he loves.

This is part of prayer Jesus prays after last supper before he puts words into action & dies on cross.

In it he prays first for himself, then for disciples

And he prays also for the next generation of believers, those who come after these disciples.

Some know already I am praying for a grandson just born.

that everything works together for his good

so that everything in his little body works together right.

so he grows and experiences wonderful things.

This is what Jesus is praying for his body, the church.

JESUS WANTS US TO BE MADE ONE BY HIS WORD
SO THAT HIS LOVE IS MAKE KNOWN TO THE WORLD
SO THAT WE CAN ALL RECEIVE HIS GLORY

JESUS WANTS US TO BE MADE ONE BY HIS WORD

²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us,

²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

One thing that makes some mothers happy, especially holidays,
is to have whole family together in one big gathering.

It may feel like big group hug.

This makes them happy when it is a sign
that the whole family is happy to be together.

If they are bickering or being cold to each other,
mother is not happy, even if they are in same room.

So, even more important than being together in same place,
is that they are united in love for each other.

This is what Jesus wants for his family, the church.

Not just that we compromise enough to be part of
one external organization.

or that we come together on special occasions
to worship together with those who believe differently,
but that we are truly united - in mind & thought as Paul says-
whether we are in same place or not.

This unity is not just association but agreement,
not like a bunch of different rocks mixed together,
but like ingredients of a cake joined together by baking.

What brings children together in loving unity with each other?

It is the love that unites them to the same mother.

What is it that truly unites people of church with each other?

It is not just love for the neighbor despite differences,
but brotherly love based on what we have in common.

Jesus, praying that we may be united with him and the Father,
says he has given us the Father's name,

that is, he has revealed to us who God the Father is.

He prays for the unity of the church which believes in him
through the word of the apostles.

The unity of the church that Jesus prays for
is based on unity with him and with God the Father
that comes from believing what he has revealed to us.

Our unity with God is disrupted by not believing his word,
which is also going to disrupt our unity with each other.

So what Jesus is praying for is not that we focus on finding way
to express unity with each other despite different beliefs,

but that we focus on what he teaches in his word
so that, like spokes on a wheel, we are drawn closer
be believing together the one true faith in God,
from which love for God and love for each other flows.

Expressions of love and unity within the church are not to be

at the expense of unity with Jesus and love for his word
but because of the faith in the truth that unites us with God.
Jesus prays for this, not only for our own sake but...

SO THAT HIS LOVE IS MAKE KNOWN TO THE WORLD

²⁰ "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one,... so that the world may believe that you have sent me.... that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known,

The way children behave and treat each other
says something about their mother.

Jesus wants us to live together in love not just for our sake
but because of what it says about him to others.

Jesus prays that others will come to faith in him
through what we say not just with our words but our actions.

Jesus and the Father are united as one in perfect love.

Jesus total, self-giving and life-giving love for us
is how he reveals to us what his Father is like.
so that we are also united with them through faith.

This unity shows in our self-giving love for each other
with the result that others who do not know God
can come to see what he is like.

and so also see the kind of love God wants to give them.

Because God wants this message to get to whole world
he wants us to share it together in unison.

A group of people singing or shouting together
is more easily heard by more people
than one person speaking at a time
but only if they are all saying the same thing in unison.

If they each have different words, it is worse.

Jesus prays that our unity will send a message to the world
about him and the Father who sent him.

This is why we need to say the same thing together
and show it by what we do together

Jesus prays for this because,
like loving mothers who want their children to grow,
he wants his church to grow and more to know his love.

SO THAT WE CAN ALL RECEIVE HIS GLORY

²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

Jesus prays true prayers, not only saying
that he wants something with his words
but also pursuing the same things through what he does.
Jesus says that he wants us to be with him and see his glory.
Surely this includes the glory of heaven
that John pictures in today's reading from Revelation.
But in v. 22, Jesus says he has already given us his glory.
Jesus says this as he is preparing to die on the cross.
More than once, Jesus speaks of his coming death
as being glorified.
What Jesus considers glory is not earthly glory.
Jesus has already revealed the glory of God
by showing his gloriously wonderful love,
willing to give his life for those who do not yet love him.
he has given his gloriously rich forgiveness for sinners
because his death pays for the sins of the whole world.
he has shown his glorious power by his miracles
which point forward to his own resurrection.
He gives glory to his disciples and to us every day
by using Holy Baptism to make helpless infants
into glorious children of God himself and heirs of heaven;
by the words of absolution which wash away our sins
and turn us weak sinners into holy & glorious saints;
by using us and the ordinary stuff of our everyday lives
to do his will and fulfill his glorious purposes in universe;
but using bread and wine to feed us the true body and blood
of our glorious God and savior.
This is not a glory that the world easily sees,
just as true unity of God's church in faith is not easily seen
but it is a glimpse of a greater glory that is not yet seen,
the glory God has prepared for us in heaven.
The glory of heaven, the final fulfillment of Jesus' prayer for us,

comes from the complete fulfillment of love and unity.
There, when all our sin, including our sinful nature,
is left behind, we are fully at one with our holy God.
Then we will know fully all of his truth
that we are unable to fathom now
when we must simply believe what he has told us.
So we will fully see how great his love for us is
and see how he has lovingly taken care of us
throughout our lives.
And so there we will be perfectly loving, without effort,
loving everyone completely as we are loved by God.
When mothers are out in public with their children,
they want them to look good and behave in loving ways
partly because this makes their mother look good
and shows how she loves them
but also for their own sake, because she wants
what is good for them.
This is what Jesus prays for us.

JESUS WANTS US TO BE MADE ONE BY HIS WORD

He wants us to be united in love,
and what makes this true and not just for show
is believing together what he tells us in his word.
SO THAT HIS LOVE IS MAKE KNOWN TO THE WORLD

What we believe and speak together in unison
and the way we show love for each other
is how the world, which cannot see God
sees what God and his love for them is like

SO THAT WE CAN ALL RECEIVE HIS GLORY
Jesus wants us and all who believe through our words
to be with him in glory
which he gives us every day through his presence with us
and his daily gifts to us
and which is revealed fully when we are
united with him and fellow believers in heaven.