



Unity in Love

God invites His church, as his extended arm, to meet the needs of the environment in which we live. But how can it be possible to deal with the problems of the people if not even the government, equipped with all the means at its disposal, can do it?

This is exactly what we want to look at together. To do this, it is necessary that we do not be impressed by the countless problems and needs and thereby be distracted from God's plan. The guiding verses we want to deal with are found in John 17

John 17 contains two pleas of Jesus

- *First, this for his 12 disciples.*
- *Secondly, the one for us.*

The prayer for his 12 apostles and the first church.

John 17:6–17

6 I have made your name revealed to the men whom you have given me of the world; they were yours, and you gave them to me, and they kept your word. 7 Now they realize that all that thou hast given me comes from thee; 8 For the words which thou hast given unto me, I have given unto them, and they have accepted them, and have truly recognized that I have come from thee, and believe that thou hast sent me. 9 I pray for them; not for the world I ask, but for those you have given me because they are yours. 10 And all that is mine is yours, and that which is yours is mine; and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world; but these are in the world, and I come to you, Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, just as we are! 12 When I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name, which you have given me, I have protected and none of them have been lost but the Son of perdition, so that the Scriptures would be fulfilled. 13 But now I come unto you and speak this in the world, that they may have my joy completely within them. 14 I have given them thy word, and the world hates them; for they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from evil. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in your truth! Your Word is truth. 18 Just as you sent me into the world, so I send it into the world. 19 And I sanctify myself for them, that they too may be sanctified in truth.

This is the prayer that Jesus said for his disciples before the night of his capture. As we know, the first part of this prayer has been fulfilled. The disciples and the first church lived in this God-made unity, at least for the first time after Pentecost. Unfortunately, this God-given unity broke soon after the first departures. We can read about this in Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline epistles.

Es is an encouragement that Jesus' prayer his disciples and the first church was fulfilled. How much more, the second part of his prayer for us will be fulfilled.

Haggai 2:9

The last glory of this house will be greater than the first, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place I want to give peace! says the LORD of hosts.

Even the prophet Haggai saw that it would behave this way. Let us look forward to what the Spirit of God has prepared for us and welcome His work and plans with us.

Now that we have briefly dealt with the fulfilled part of Jesus' prayer, let us turn to the second unfulfilled part of Jesus' prophetic prayer.

John 17:20–24

*20 But I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me by their word, 21 that they may all be one, even as you, Father, in me and I in you; That they too may be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 And I have given unto them the glory which thou hast given unto me, that they may be one, even as we are one, 23 I in them and thou shalt in me, that they may come to perfect unity, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and love them as you love me. 24 Father, **I will** that where I am, those who thou hast given me may also be with me, that they may see my glory which thou hast given me; for thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world.*

Let's respond to God's plan for Jesus' body, *"the plan that has existed since eternity, has never changed, and will never change."* Because only in this way do we recognize what he intends to do with us. Namely, to restore us to the point where He can unleash us on our surroundings with the full equipment of the Holy Spirit. However, if we allow ourselves to be distracted by God's intent by what is happening in this world, we will become blind to God's work.

John 17:20.

But not for them alone I ask, but also for those who believe in me through their word ...

Jesus asks here explicitly for you and for me because we are among those who hold on to him in faith, do not let go in faith, but stand by him. In John 17:24, we read a statement of Jesus' will to His Father that appears only once in the Bible. **"I want"** ... and this **"I want"** refers to us. It is the only time that Jesus has expressed his own will so succinctly to his Father, otherwise we always hear that your will is not mine, but your will.

He, Jesus, has clearly spoken out for us, his bride, that he wants you and me with him to let us see his glory. This is and should be an encouragement for us that with his help we will achieve the goal. How the Holy Spirit wants to achieve this, let us now look at each other.

John 17:21

that they may all be one, like you, Father, in me and I in you, that they too may be one in us, that the world may believe that you have sent me.

"You in me, I in you – that they are one in us" ... we don't really know this narrow "*being* close ". Normal would be for us, I in you or you in me ... but Jesus says here quite explicitly, "***you in me and I in you, that they too are one in us***" that is, a complete merging into each other. No longer able to distinguish who is what and what belongs to whom.

Jesus prays that we will come into this unity with the Father and Son, that through this unity in the Godhead we will also reach a God-willed unity among ourselves. I think we can't quite imagine in the final consequence what Jesus asked his Father in high priestly prayer, because he said nothing more than that God may be the catalyst so that we may become one among ourselves in Him, just as Jesus and the Father are one. Inseparable, forever connected in love.

The unity for which Jesus prayed is the unity without which neither the Father nor the Son can and will live. In this unity he wants to include us, with whom we may come to unity with him together with him.

John 17:22.

And the glory that you have given me, I have given them that they are one as we are one.

He has given us the glory given to Him by the Father, that is:

- *I have given them Your likeness and Your essence.*
- *That is: the appearance, the sight,*
 - *the appearance of someone on whom is seen,*
 - *the appearance that attracts attention,*
 - *requires respect that looks like something.*
- *Glory includes all that is superior in divine nature and related to The Self-Revelation of God. It includes all that God already is in His final revelation to us and will be in the completed kingdom of God.*
- *That is, that which of God's majesty and glory will become visible*

to men in His revelation.

- *More precisely, glory is not limited primarily to the outward, glamorous appearance. But the transcendent, seeming being from within, which is reflected in the external appearance that attracts our attention. So unconditional acceptance, love kindness peace, joy, humility, gentleness, purity. But also, authority, the radiance of divine presence, as well as the authority to call things into existence that are not yet.*

The one who brings about God's image and nature in us is the Holy Spirit. Through it we have the attractiveness that seems to be from within, which is reflected in the external appearance and in turn attracts the attention of the people around us.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, this attractiveness attracts attention because we are no longer as our environment expected or knew us. God's likeness and the nature of Jesus radiates from us and spreads more and more in and around us. The ever-evolving nature of Jesus cannot remain hidden, so it is inevitable, our destiny will attract attention.

Let us understand each other correctly, not we should attract attention, but when we have completely surrendered ourselves to God, his essence in us, because Jesus is so different in us, will not be able to remain hidden and act. He is whose essence attracts attention in us.

John 17:23.

- I in them and you in me, that they may be completed in one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and loved them as you have loved me.

Jesus repeats the statement of unity in his prayer, but this time by communicating to us the goal of this unity.

I in them and you in me, that they may be completed in one. And that means:

- *Jesus points here to a process that he will initiate and complete in*

us.

- *A process that brings us to completion in divine unity*
- *shall make us perfect and complete us.*
- *The divine destiny about our lives in relation to time: to live in unity with one another, to bring our life in Jesus to completion.*
- *That is:*
 - *To achieve the given goal in God's time, to be complete, to achieve perfection by being made perfect in terms of our lives, to be transformed into the image of Christ, and thus to be able to carry out god's mission and be a "royal priesthood."*
 - *So, to be completed, fulfillment in relation to the prophetic prayer of Jesus.*

Briefly brought to completion, with the aspect of:

- *Our Mission God's Plans*
- *God's Goals with Individuals, and the Regional, National, and Global Body of Jesus*
- *And all this at a time intended by God*

If we are now to be brought to completion in all areas and levels of our lives, it should be done by doing so according to the prayer of Jesus:

... I in them and you in me, that they may be completed in one

So, we have not yet come to completion, for we are not yet in this divine unity. Thus, as individuals, as well as local church, we will be led to completion as the Body of Jesus. It is not we who could do anything, no, we are led into this divine unity by the Holy Spirit.

2. Corinthians 3:17-18

But the Lord is the Spirit; and where there is the Spirit of the Lord, there is freedom. 18 But all of us, looking with our faces unveiled at the glory of the Lord as in a mirror, are transformed into the same image of glory to glory as (it) happens of the Lord, the Spirit.

"... as (it) happens from the Lord, the Spirit".

Through the growing unity in him and with each other, we increasingly experience the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit. In addition, we learn what it means to receive tasks from God in unity and to complete them in unity. It is wonderful to talk about unity, but we should simply be aware that nothing in the kingdom is God's self-doubt. So is also related to unity. It gives us, the community, the global body of Jesus, the direction willed by God and through this orientation towards the common goal, but also motivation, encouragement, power, and strength, to achieve goals given to us by God.

Because he is the active part of this unity created by him, all his possibilities and abilities are open to us. That's why we can say with David, "If God is for me, who can be against me."

John 17:23.

I in them and you in me, that they may be completed in one, that the world may know that you have sent me and loved them as you have loved me.

By being completed in one, the world realizes:

- *That the Father sent Jesus.*
- *That the Father loves us as He loves Jesus.*

*Also, people far from God begin to recognize,
that the father loves every single person.*

First things first

God says in His Word that the time will come when there will be a difference between people who follow Him and those who do not. I think that time is dawning.

Matthew 6:33.

But first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness! And all this will be added to you.

Before I delve into the text in more detail, I would like to clarify some terms so that we have the same understanding of the word contents for further reflections, so we will take a closer look at the word contents of seek, first, kingdom of God, justice:

- **Strive**

seek, attain, want to come into his possession, to be out for something, to desire, to investigate, to demand.

- **First**

It means in terms of:

- *Time... first, first*
- *Priority... earlier, rather*
- *Rank... first, at the top*
- *In summary, the statement "First, first and foremost, very special ..."*

- **The Kingdom of God- Servants in the Kingdom of God**

the kingship or the kingdom of God that began with Jesus' coming. It is already spiritually visible in Jesus and his disciples. Both terms, both "the king's rule or the kingdom of God," also refer to biblical prophecy and mean the eternal kingdom that God will establish and give to Christ. It is already spiritually present on earth, albeit in a rather unfinished, embryonic, and inconspicuous state, but with Jesus' return, at the very beginning of the thousand-year kingdom, it will come to full light in one fell swoop, while Satan's kingdom, now so present, ceases to exist in one fell swoop.

- **Justice**

The guiding idea is that justice reigns when everyone does what is expected of him, and everyone receives what he deserves.

Justice assumes the rank of an existing fully defined, inviolable, divine basic order of existence. In addition to the Greek word meaning, the Old Testament Hebrew use of interpretation is decisive for the New Testament. Accordingly, justice is a relation concept:

- **Justice** refers to the thinking, speaking, and acting of a person/person group that is bound to a relationship and agreements existing with another person/person group and behaves accordingly.

If we begin to reach out and seize with all that is in us according to the kingdom of God and his righteousness, his instructions, according to the orders of coexistence that apply to us, then *all this* will be added to us.

In this context, everything we need to live. Accommodation, supply of clothing etc.

Matthew 6:25–34

*That is why I say to you: Do not worry about your life, what you should eat and what you should drink, nor your body, what to wear! Isn't life more than food and body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of heaven: they do not sow and reap, nor do they gather in the barns, and **your Heavenly Father nourishes them**. Aren't you worth much more than them? 27 But who of you can add a single Ulna to your lifetime by your worries? 28 And why do you care about clothes? Look at the lilies of the field as they grow! They do not bother and do not spin; 29 But I tell you that Solomon, in all his glory, was not clothed like one of them. 30 If God now clothes the grass of the field that stands today and will be thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not do it much more to you, you little believers? 31 Therefore, ye should not worry and say, "**What will we eat?**" or "**What will we drink?**" or: "**What will we dress with?**" 32 For all these things are sought by the Gentiles, but your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 Rather, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you! 34 Wherefore, ye shall not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will take care of His own. Every day his own plague is enough.*

Jesus wants us to understand that all our worries can only serve transient areas. The real and the important is beyond our possibilities. That is why he recommends that we do not even get involved in hypothetical mind games that deprive us of the security and tranquility of God. He shows us by means of birds, which are worth less to us than children of the father, that he himself takes care of them. Our Father knows what we need and has tailored everything individually to the needs of each of His children.

That with *"the costume"* is again performance, you may say no, this is not performance, but determined, radical devotion to God's cause.

Here I must make it clear that it is very difficult for us not to describe an urgently needed measure on our part with the negative word 'must'. Since there is no need in the kingdom of God. There is only the alternative, if you want that, then it is necessary that this and that step are taken or that this and that is done or omitted. It is and always remains our choice whether we like it or not.

Believe me, if we choose to do so, we will experience what the manifest kingdom of God can do in our lives. For his kingdom can be experienced and experienced in real life for those who give themselves completely to it.

God's goal is to let us experience and experience his love, his essence, and then pour out his love into our environment through us.

Look, to understand this, we need to understand God's nature- God is love and love is God, so His qualities of love are written down in Scripture in 1 Corinthians 13:4ff:

- *Love is long-suffering*
- *Love is kind*
- *Love does not envy*
- *Love does not inflate*
- *Love does not behave indecently*
- *Love does not seek its own*
- *Love cannot be bitterly*
- *Love does not attribute evil*
- *Love does not rejoice in injustice*
- *Love rejoices in truth*
- *Love endures everything*
- *Love believes everything*
- *Love hopes everything*
- *Love endures everything*

Without this understanding, we find it difficult to understand why love is a prerequisite for unity and unity to see the fullness of his Spirit's

work in our lives. Therefore, let us briefly consider three aspects of God's love:

- *Love that accepts*
- *Love that trusts us*
- *Love that saves, heals, and liberates*

Love that accepts

John 3:16.

For God so loved the world, that he gave up his only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in him may not perish, but have eternal life.

Even when we were enemies, God reconciled us to Himself.

Romans 5:10

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, we will be saved much more, since we are reconciled, by His life.

According to the dictionary, being an enemy means:

- *One who seeks the injury, destruction, or failure of his opponent.*
- *Peculiarities of hostility are, envy, jealousy, resentment, hatred, slander or destructive attitude, actions and speeches aimed at his opponent.*

God's love longs for His creature. He who says of himself that he is enough for himself longs for us to be loved by his creatures.

- *He loves every person especially and unconditionally.*
- *He saves everyone who believes in Jesus Christ.*
- *He makes no difference and knows no reputation of the person.*
- *He simply loves his creature.*

In the state of our absolute enmity, God has reconciled us to Himself. Not just by words, but by deed. The deity gave himself. In the sacrifice of Jesus, he himself opened the way back to his Father. His work of redemption is complete, and everyone can go from enemy to son, daughter, if only he wants to.

God is reconciled to every human being. Let's not deceive us, but this is not a one-way street, what God expects of us humans are that we agree to the conditions of his work of redemption. This is so simple and in its simple simplicity yet so difficult for our human mind:

Romans 10:9–10

For if you confess Jesus as Lord with your mouth and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes to be righteous, and with the mouth one confesses to be saved

- *To believe with the heart ... that God raised Jesus from the dead.*
- *Confess with your mouth ... that Jesus lives and is Lord*

Love that trusts us

Mark 16:15

Go all over the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

God entrusts us with the work of his Son by entrusting us with the spread of the Gospel. He did not decide to obtain the proclamation through his infallible angels. He has decided to spread the good news through us.

That's why he needs you and me.

In his love, he invests trust in you and me to fulfill his mission.

In his eyes, you are trustworthy!

This trusting love releases our motivation, our possibilities and, finally, our creativity to serve Him and to carry out the tasks assigned to us with the help of the Holy Spirit. Quite simply because we want to prove ourselves worthy of his trust.

Love that saves, heals, and liberates

Isaiah 53:5.

But he was pierced for the sake of our offense, smashed for our sin's sake. The punishment lay upon him for our peace, and through his strings we have been healed.

Jesus' work of redemption is holistic, nothing is excluded.

- ***Punished*** that is why we have peace with God.
- ***Strips*** therefore we are healed by his wounds.
- ***Peace with God*** creates the basis for the restoration of a healthy relationship with Him and with our fellow human beings. Through Jesus, we are transported back to the starting point of the purpose of creation – to have fellowship with God.

However, through our experiments with sin, we were wounded in spirit, soul, and body. Therefore, the sacrifice of Jesus also includes holistic healing for our spirit, soul, and body, and thus our full restoration. We are loved healthy by God's love - when we expose ourselves to Him.

One question remains ... And why all this ... so that the world may know

John 17:23

*... I in them and you in me, that they may be completed in one, **that the world may know** that you have sent me and loved them as you have loved me.*

- ***Recognition*** usually means knowledge based on experience in contrast to knowledge which usually refers to knowledge through inner view and conviction.
It means knowing, experiencing remembering, recognizing, understanding, knowing, being acquainted with someone; understand; be aware of something, judge, distinguish, acknowledge, think with approval, know, pay attention

Through the fullness of love that we experience, through being one with Him, through the pursuit of His kingdom and his righteousness, the form of life that is the basis of life for us humans, people realize that we are children of God. Quite simply because our endeavor is aligned with God's purposes and intentions.

The orientation will increasingly turn away from us towards the needs and needs of others, the city, and the country.

That is and must remain our goal. God has answers for our environment, our village and our city and our country. It is quite interesting to see that if we live according to these guidelines, the world will recognize who we are by our lifestyle.

This is very easy to understand, because God will instruct us in his love to serve people ourselves. Because if something is noticeable in our society, it is not selfish motives.

Therefore, the world will realize that the Father loves us as He loved Jesus. For the works of the Father are love.

We will serve the children, the mothers, the fathers, the elderly, the helpless, the poor, the homeless, the addicted, the outcasts and even refugees. It is our task to show people the love of God by letting them share in His love.

It is not the social groups that count, no, the people who have been bought dearly by Jesus. They belong to him although, they do not know it yet and they probably have not yet wasted a thought on it.

But how is this to be done?

It is doubtful who we look upon ourselves and receive us According to the values of justice anchored in us ... so we can only say, I can never do that.

This is where the Word of God says to us who are desperate:

John 15:3-5

*3 I am the true vine, and my father is the wine grower. 4 Abide in me, and I abide in you! Just as the vine cannot bear fruit by itself if it does not remain on the vine, so it cannot if it does not remain in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the vines. Whoever abides in me and I in him bears much fruit; **for apart from me you***

cannot do anything.

Separately from me, you cannot do anything. Our question should be, why do we keep trying without wanting to do anything about it? He told us that we can't do anything without it, but by "wanting to do ourselves" we get failures on the running meter.

This seems to be anchored in our aspirations for independence, which arises in a latent rebellion to God's leadership. The Spirit of God wants us to experience from our own experience that we cannot bring anything from ourselves.

The sooner we understand, the easier our further life path will be.

- *Being filled with God's love*
- *Understanding that we are flesh and blood people*
- *Godliness*
- *Repentance – Turning to God's Values*
- *To Love Jesus- Bride of Jesus*

A strange phenomenon that many Christians' face

Ephesians 5:27.

*... that he might present herself as a church that is glorious, so that she may **have no stains, wrinkles, or anything like that, but that she may be holy and impeccable.***

I cannot imagine that Jesus would want to bring home a bride who has not yet been prepared as she presents herself today. At least partially, it seems that she resembles a quarrelsome woman rather than a bride inflamed in passionate love for her groom. Many of his children are tired warriors, frustrated, disappointed with what they have been through for various reasons.

Now, many of us are going through abnormal, sometimes strange idiosyncrasies in themselves. Often, we do not recognize ourselves in our thoughts, actions, and language. It dismays us that we think, act, and speak in this way. The worst thing about it is that we can neither

classify nor classify it, as it absolutely does not correspond to our self-image, let alone a person redeemed by Jesus. Questions arise:

- *What's wrong with me?*
- *Why do I behave like this?*
- *Am I converted at all?*

The Bible gives us an answer to these unpleasant experiences:

Matthew. 13:24

The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seeds in his field. 25 But while the people were asleep, his enemy came and sowed weeds in the middle of the wheat and went away. 26 But when the seed sprouted and bore fruit, the weeds also appeared. 27 But the servants of the master of the house came and said unto him, Lord, have thou not sowed good seeds in thy field? Where did he get weeds from? 28 But he said unto them, a hostile man has done this. But the servants said to him: Do you want us to go and read it together? 29 But he said, no, that ye may not, when reading the weeds together, at the same time as you dig out the wheat. 30 Let the two grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers: First, read the weeds together, and tie them in bundles to burn them; but collect the wheat in my barn!

The disciples asked Jesus if it would not make sense to weed the field and thus free it from the weeds. Jesus' answer we read in verse 30

Matthew 13:29.

29 But he said, no, that ye may not, when reading together the weeds, at the same time as they weed, 30 let the two grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers: Read the weeds together first and tie them in bundles to burn them; but collect the wheat in my barn!

What happened:

The enemy has managed to cheer us on his garbage in one way or another, and we have willingly ensured that the fruit has ripened until we realized that something was wrong with us.

Are we guilty? Yes and no.

- *Yes, we are responsible for allowing these naughtiest to take root in us and for not immediately turning to Jesus with this problem.*

- *No, we cannot be held responsible when birds fly over our heads. However, we can and must defend ourselves that they build nests on our heads.*

Satan will always try to influence us negatively and destructively; we cannot change that. However, we can and should do the following:

- *Do not listen to Satan's nasty proposals.*
- *Satan does not admit that a distance to Jesus builds.*

At the same time, we can see a pastoral component in Jesus' response. He does not want the young, tender light to be damaged. He allows the fruits and the weeds to grow until the fruit is strong enough, syncretical no longer be damaged by the tearing out of the weeds. We can endure the spiritual truths to which the Holy Spirit draws our attention. It will not harm us, but free us from constriction.

Coming back to the Bible passage, we read that both good and evil must come to harvest maturity before harvesting. But one thing we should understand is that not only evil per se must reach full maturity, but also the seed of evil in each individual human being and that does not exclude you and me. Christians are also sighted, as the Bible tells us.

Luke 22:31–32

But the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Behold, Satan has desired you to see you as the wheat 32 But I have prayed for you that your faith may not cease; and once you have returned, strengthen your brethren.

Jesus addresses this word to Peter immediately before the events in the Garden of Gethsemane, that is, just before his prisoners, at the beginning of the turn of the century. This is exactly what happens to us, we too are living in a very significant time. Satan sees the children of God and seeks whom he could deceive. But Jesus also prayed for us that our faith would not stop.

And this is where the work of the Holy Spirit begins. He reminds us of

what Jesus said and taught. For us, it is a real chance to escape what he, Satan, intends to do, because the Holy Spirit makes us aware that something is wrong with us. That which we ourselves observe. So, the only question is, how do we react to these perceptions? Keep us from turning to Jesus or let us run into his arms.

This only reminds us that without Him, Jesus, we cannot do anything. So, let's stop discussing how much is nothing. Let us finally believe that we are unconditionally dependent on Jesus and his intervention, because without Him we will not be able to achieve the given goal.

We should welcome what is happening to us, because it shows us that the Holy Spirit is at work in us, and he is preparing us as part of the bride of Jesus. We can and must repent of our misconduct and open the concerns of our hearts that we have so far withheld from Jesus. But the Holy Spirit will refresh the body of Jesus through his renewed devotion, which needs to be refreshed, purified, and sanctified what needs sanctification and purification.

Accordingly, there is still one question to answer:
What to do when we are alienated by ourselves and our thinking, speaking and behavior, to the point of not finding ourselves again.

1. John 1:9

But when we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, that He forgives our sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

It's that easy to get back into the joy and freedom of the mind.