

The Upper Room Blueprint – Lesson 12

“Jesus’ Mission and the Church’s Mission: Remembering Our Purpose”

Summary

John 17:1–5 shows Jesus centering His life on glorifying the Father by completing His mission. As He returns to the Father in glory, He passes that mission to the church, calling believers to refocus their lives and ministries on God’s purpose.

Scripture

John 17:6–26

1. Introduction

Opening Thought

Unity sounds beautiful until you try to live it. It’s easy to talk about being “one,” but real unity gets tested in:

- misunderstandings
- personality differences
- ministry preferences
- cultural tensions
- political pressures
- past hurts
- unmet expectations

Churches don’t usually split because of big theological crises.

They fracture slowly—through small resentments, quiet frustrations, and unspoken disappointments.

The disciples were on the edge of their own relational fracture. Jesus was leaving. Fear was rising. Pressure was mounting. Their future felt uncertain. Their relationships were fragile. And in that moment, Jesus prays—not for their success, not for their comfort, not for their influence.

He prays for their unity. “Holy Father, keep them in Your name... that they may be one.” Jesus knows something we often forget: the mission of the church collapses when the unity of the church collapses. Jesus’ prays that His people would be protected, united, and rooted in their identity—so they can carry His mission into the world with strength and clarity.

Scripture References about Unity

Genesis 11:1–9 | Acts 2:1–4 | Philippians 2:1–4

2. Unity Begins with Identity (John 17:6–11)

Jesus Reveals the Father to His People

Jesus says He has “manifested” the Father’s name. This means He has revealed God’s character, heart, and nature. Unity is impossible when identity is unclear. We are one because we belong to the Father.

Believers Are Given to Jesus by the Father

Unity is rooted in the truth that we are God’s people before we are anything else. Jesus describes His followers as chosen, given, kept, loved.

Biblical Illustration: Israel at Sinai (Exodus 19:4–6)

Before giving the law, God reminds Israel who they are—His treasured possession. Identity comes before instruction. Unity flows from knowing to whom you belong.

Jesus Prays for Protection

“Keep them in Your name.” Jesus knows unity is fragile. He prays that the Father would guard their hearts, minds, and relationships.

➔ Unity is not achieved by human effort—it is preserved by divine protection.

3. Unity Is Rooted in Truth and Love (John 17:12–19)

Jesus Protects His Disciples Through Truth

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” Truth is not a weapon against each other—it is a foundation under all of us. **Unity is not uniformity.** Unity is shared commitment to God’s truth and God’s love.

The World Threatens Unity

Jesus says the world will hate His followers. Pressure from outside can create fractures inside.

Jesus Sends His People into the World

Unity is not inward-focused. It is outward-focused. We are united so we can be sent.

Benefits of Church Unity

- Deepens spiritual health by allowing encouragement, trust, and growth flourish.
- Protects the church from division, discouragement, and spiritual attack.
- Multiplies mission impact by uniting hearts and resources around God’s purpose.

The church’s unity is part of its witness. A divided church cannot heal a divided world.
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4. Practical Application: Healing Division and Strengthening Community (John 17:20–26)

Principle	Application
See Each Other Through Jesus' Prayer	Jesus prays for future believers—us. He prays that we would be one. This means every believer you meet is someone Jesus prayed for. Before reacting to someone, remind yourself: “Jesus prayed for them.”
Practice Unity Through Humility	Unity grows where pride dies. Humility makes room for grace, patience, and understanding. Choose one relationship where you can take the humble step first.
Let Love Lead the Way	Jesus says He has given His people the same love the Father gave Him. Unity is sustained by love, not agreement. Show one act of undeserved kindness this week.
Protect the Community Through Prayer	Jesus prayed for unity because unity needs prayer. We must pray for our church the same way Jesus did. Spend five minutes daily praying for unity in your congregation.
Unite Around Mission, Not Preference	Preferences divide. Mission unites. When the church focuses on what Jesus sent us to do, unity strengthens. Ask, “How does this help us reach people for Christ?” before engaging in debate.

5. Discussion Questions

- Why does Jesus root unity in identity rather than agreement?
- How does truth protect unity instead of threatening it?
- What pressures today most threaten unity in the church?
- How can believers practice humility in ways that strengthen community?
- What does it look like for unity to become part of the church's witness?

6. Closing Thoughts

John 17:6–26 shows that **unity is not optional—it is essential**. Jesus prays for His people to be protected, sanctified, and united so the world can see God's love through them. When the church lives as one, it reflects the heart of the Father and the mission of the Son.

Challenge for the Week

Each day this week, pray:

“Lord, make me an instrument of unity in Your church.”

Then take one intentional step toward healing, reconciliation, or encouragement.

Unity grows one act of grace at a time.