

THE GOSPEL OF

JOHN

STUDENT LESSON

WE'RE IN THE
ENDGAME
NOW

Avengers: Infinity War (Spoilers) follows the conquest of the Mad Titan, Thanos, to secure the six Infinity stones that will grant him unfathomable power. Thanos believes that the universe does not have enough supplies to support its entire populous. To solve this, his goal is to reduce the population of the entire universe by half to bring balance to the universal supply. Towards the end of the movie, we find Iron Man, Dr. Strange, Spider-Man, and The Guardians of the Galaxy on the planet Titan, coming up with a plan to ensnare Thanos long enough to draw the Infinity Gauntlet from the mighty fist of Thanos. Shortly after Thanos's arrival, the plan goes awry due to the discovery of the failure of prevention and acquisition of the Soul Stone. With four out of six stones in possession, this portion of The Avengers is no match for the undefeated champ of the film. A trap quickly becomes a survival mission when the powerful, purple persecutor bests the team one by one. Barely scraping by alive, dealing only a minor scratch to the Great Titan, and running out of options, Iron Man's life is spared in exchange for the fifth stone, the Power Stone, wielded by Dr. Strange. Thanos vanishes through a portal, narrowly avoiding Peter Quill's barrage of plasma shots. "Did we just lose?" asks Peter. Tony Stark asks Dr. Strange why he surrendered the stone.

"We're in the endgame, now." Strange replies.

John records our passage this week as a final moment of Jesus' earthly freedom. After this passage, Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane and is betrayed by Judas Iscariot, being arrested immediately. This week, we find Jesus praying for the believers of the world to be united to accomplish great things. Spoiler alert for Avenger: Endgame, but once the Avengers assembled, they defeated Thanos. Jesus already won the victory over Satan at the cross. Jesus is praying that we are united so that the world will know that the Father sent Jesus and we can then share the Gospel with the whole world!

Open it

1. What's a topic you've gotten into an argument with your friends over that wasn't important in the long run?

Daily Devotions

Day 1 — Today's Theme: Explore It

Read John 17:20–26.

2. Who all is Jesus praying for in this passage?
3. What will the world believe when all believers unite?
4. What does Jesus want the disciples to see?
5. What happens when God is revealed to people, and they believe?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Avengers! Assemble.

Read John 17:20–21.

Last week, we dove deep into the second of three parts of Jesus' prayer featured in John 17. Today, we'll be talking about the last part of this prayer! Pretty cool how Jesus' prayers are so dense that we can split them into three weeks' worth of studies!

Anyway, Jesus prayed for the disciples specifically last week. This week, Jesus is praying for ALL believers. Just the believers back then, though, right? NO! He's praying for "all those who *WILL* believe in [Him] because of *THEIR* teaching." He's praying for all future believers too! You and me!

He prays for unity in the church, that all believers can unite as one. Sounds great! Right? Well, if you know anything about Christianity, there's a bit of a divide. We are literally called PROTESTants because we PROTESTed the Catholic church during the 16th-century reformation. Some of the best estimates say that there are at least 40 THOUSAND known denominations of Christianity globally.¹ With each denomination having its own doctrine or the views on every stance the Bible makes, it really puts into perspective just how DIVIDED Christians are over everything. So how do we know who's right? Who's wrong?

This passage describes the importance of Christian unity. We may all be divided on minor things that don't necessarily dictate our salvation. But one truth should remain constant—the hill we die on is that the GOSPEL² is 100% true! Jesus is the only way to get to the Father and eternal life!

¹ <https://thebensmartblog.com/2014/02/12/40000-denominations-worldwide-christianity-divided/>

² It's been a while, what's the GOSPEL acronym? Remembering this acronym has made it so much easier to recall everything you need to know for sharing the Gospel! Remember, these six words aren't the ONLY thing you should say. There are many aspects to Christianity. So, to help organize your thoughts when evangelizing, the GOSPEL acronym acts as a bit of a checklist for you!

God • Our • Sins • Paying • Everyone • Life

- 6. What are the most important “hills to die on”? In other words, what things will you go to the grave fighting for?**

True unity in a church, however, is **STRENGTHENED** by diversity in the form of denominations! If nobody debated about the Bible, nobody would find a need to research what God says about various topics!³ Even the Sanhedrin could’ve been considered a Jewish denomination at that earlier point. As they interpreted the Bible (or chose to ignore certain prophecies) differently than Jesus, it caused some of the Sanhedrin to review their beliefs or become curious about Jesus’ teachings⁴. However, this doesn’t mean we should let those who are against our doctrine and beliefs **RUN** the church. Our Christian faith, like muscles, needs to be trained and challenged in order to strengthen the fibers of our beliefs. Backing up your claims with evidence is probably what you do every day in your Language Arts class. It’s most important to know why you believe what you believe, especially in the political climate we’re experiencing! Stand up for your beliefs!

- 7. What would you do if someone close to you (parent, sibling, friend, etc.) had a different belief than yours?**

- 8. How does our unity in the church testify the truth of Christ?**

³ <https://bible.org/seriespage/35-high-priestly-prayer-jesus-john-17>

⁴ John 3

Day 3 — Today's Theme: A Little Taste of the Glory! See What It Tastes Like!

Read John 17:22–23.

Have you ever thought about what happens to your stuff when you die? Kind of a morbid question, right? To make sure all your earthly possessions go to the people you want them to, you have to make something called a Last Will and Testament. This is kinda what I believe Jesus is doing here in John 17. Jesus was praying his “Last Will” to the Father about, not his physical possessions, but His spiritual ones. Now, I don’t know too much about the legal side of this and how a lawyer would “dispense” the glory onto every future believer EVER. But, I know that, through God, all things are possible.

In this paragraph, Jesus is wrapping up this whole prayer by talking about the gift of glory. This glory was gifted to Him by the Father that He now bestows onto us. The glory He’s talking about here is explained pretty well by Bob Deffinbaugh, a well-known contributor to Bible studies. He says, “The glory the Father gave the Son was the glory of the humility of the incarnation, culminating both in the glorification of the Son at the crucifixion and in the glory of his resurrected and exalted state.”⁵

So, to summarize, the glory Jesus was given by the Father was Jesus' entire existence on Earth. From the humility of His birth and life, all the way to His sacrifice, resurrection, and “exalted state,” as Deffinbaugh puts it.

9. Jesus gave us this glory (noun); what does that mean for us and how should we as Christians be unified under this truth?

10. How will Christians being in “perfect unity” show the world that Jesus is God’s Son? What does Jesus say will happen and what does that look like practically?

⁵<https://bible.org/seriespage/39-high-priestly-prayer-jesus-part-iii-john-1720-26>

Day 4 — Today's Theme: I Can't Hear You

Read John 17:24–26.

When I was in choir, unity was a very important aspect of the overall sound produced. In order to stand out from other choirs, everyone had to match what's called timbre (describes the voice of the sound producer, pronounced tamb-er). Timbre uniformity is important in the choir because it's what allows the choir to sound the same and MULTIPLY a voice. When first learning a song in any language (including English) we all had to agree on what word made what sound. With West Aurora High School being a very inclusive school with many different backgrounds, we'd have a few English words we'd have to pronounce quite strangely. You can have the whole choir singing one pronunciation of, for example, the word Hallelujah (HAW-llelujah or HUH-llelujah) and instantly the entire message of the choir becomes that much more muddled. Apply it to the rest of the song with various different consonants emphasized wrong and it brings down the whole piece. The diction of these words could be the difference between grabbing the attention of the "Choir Dads" that are at your concert for their kid who finished singing half an hour ago, and losing them entirely.

Jesus in these last few verses of His prayer in chapter 17 is talking about just this! Well, not necessarily the singing part... But the unity aspect! We as the Global Christian community have to be UNITED in our message or else we'll lose those who may be on the fence LOOKING for an excuse to be disengaged.

Jesus prays that those who believe can be where He is so that they can see all the glory that the Father has given Him. He closes the prayer with verses 25 and 26, pointing out the world isn't saved. Jesus, however, has planted the seed in the revelation given to the disciples.

11. What does Christian unity look like in different areas in your life? (Oh boy! A table!!)

Church	School	Home

Note: This study was written by Pastor Jeremy Anderson. www.villagebible.church/students.