

I. The Big Deal About Unity: Ephesians 4:1-6, 30-32

John 17 High Priestly Prayer

The longest recorded prayer of Jesus, called the “High Priestly Prayer,” is found in John 17:1–26. After voicing a triumphant declaration of victory in 16:33 (“I have overcome the world”), Jesus proceeds to pray for Himself, for His disciples, and for future believers. Facing His hour of deepest travail, Jesus looks forward to the blessed results of His victory over sin and death—the gathering of the redeemed, and the love and unity that God and the redeemed will share (17:20–26).

Jesus Prays

(1) For Himself: (vv. 1-5)	(2) For His disciples: (vv. 6–19)	(3) For future believers: (vv. 20-26)
He affirms the glory of the Cross (vv. 1, 2)	He prays for their knowledge (vv. 6-9)	He prays for their oneness (vv. 20–22)
He expresses the very essence of eternal life (vv. 3, 4)	He prays for their perseverance (vv. 10-12)	He prays for their perfect unity (v. 23)
He rejoices in the shared glory of the Father (v. 5)	He prays for their joy (v. 13)	He prays for their future presence with Him (vv. 24, 25)
	He prays for their sanctification (vv. 14-17)	He prays for their mutual love (v. 26)
	He prays for their mission (vv. 18, 19)	¹

II. How to structure Unity: Catholic (Universal). Orthodoxy (Right by Majority). Bible.

ORTHODOXY: Right by Majority (Rule of Faith)

The Apostle’s Creed

(baptism confession in 2nd century Rome)

“I believe in God Almighty, and in Christ Jesus, his only Son our Lord, who is born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was buried, and the third day rose from the dead, who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father whence he comes to judge the living and the dead, I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.”

¹ Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1996). *Nelson’s complete book of Bible maps & charts: Old and New Testaments* (Rev. and updated ed.). Thomas Nelson.

- What scripture verses are contained in this “short” statement of standards?

TOPICS:

God Almighty. Jesus as God’s only Son. Born of HS and Mary. Crucified: Death, Burial, Resurrection. **Ascended to heaven, restored by God.** Holy Ghost. Holy church. Remission of sins (salvation). Resurrection. Eternity.

Ascended to heaven, restored by God.

Hebrews:1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2.

Philippians 2:5-11

BIBLE:

The Bible is perfect (Psalm 18:30)

The Bible is true (Psalm 33:4)

The Bible will last forever (Psalm 119:89)

The Bible gives us wisdom (Psalm 119:99)

The Bible can be trusted (Psalm 119:138)

The Bible reveals the truth (Acts 18:28)

The Bible is holy (Romans 1:2)

God’s Holy Spirit helps us understand the Bible (1 Corinthians 2:12–16)

The Bible is authoritative (Galatians 3:10)

The Bible is a Christian’s spiritual weapon (Ephesians 6:17)

The Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16)

The Bible judges our life (Hebrews 4:12)

The Bible helps us grow spiritually (1 Peter 2:2)²

Warning: Revelation 22:18-21

III. Martyr: Standing for Truth.

martyr (Gk., witness) Blood witness, especially one who dies for his or her faith rather than abjure it. In Christian history, Stephen was the protomartyr, or first martyr, as recorded in Acts 7:54–60. According to Tertullian, “the blood of the martyrs is seed [of the church].” Martyrdom was seen as a baptism of blood. The certainty of Christian resurrection gave the martyrs a powerful motive. The anniversary of the martyr’s death, called as *natalis*, or heavenly birthday, began to be celebrated from the second century. In hagiography, martyrs rank after the Virgin Mary and the apostles but before all saints. The veneration of martyrs’ bones began with St. Polycarp’s remains, and most of the martyrs are commemorated by special feast days. Special intercessory powers were also attributed to the martyrs.³

² Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation*. Tyndale House Publishers.

³ Kurian, G. T. (2001). In *Nelson’s new Christian dictionary: the authoritative resource on the Christian world*. Thomas Nelson Publishers.