

# Who is JESUS?

## Jesus' Love for His Church

May 28, 2006

Jesus' prayer for His church isn't concerned with how business will be conducted. He's not interested in who will be in charge or where it will be located or the size and shape of its worship space. Jesus prays for his "church," for the people he has gathered around him. Across two thousand years those words come to us, "Holy Father, protect them in your name."

**John 17:10-16** — All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

### For Personal Study

Imagine you have a teenage son or daughter who is going off to college. The school is across country, and your child's flight leaves tomorrow morning. You've gone out to dinner one last time as a family. And even though there is email, text messaging, and nationwide calling plans, it just won't be the same. And it shouldn't; it's time to let your child go out into the world. Soon you won't be there to guide his or her actions or share advice on a daily basis. So in these last hours together, *what do you say?* What are the important things you want your young adult to remember? What will you pray about together and later on your own?

When Jesus knew his time on Earth with his disciples would soon be finished, he shared a meal as well. It was the Last Supper, and after Jesus washed the disciples' feet and they had eaten, Jesus dedi-

cated part this precious time to share some of his most important teachings.

This is where Jesus commanded them to love one another just as he loved them (John 13:34 and 15:12-17). He called himself "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). He told them about the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17 and 16:5-15). He shared the analogy of the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8).

At the end of this intense time together, Jesus prays for the disciples, those there that night as well as *everyone* who comes to believe in him. All those years ago, in his last hours on Earth, *Jesus prayed for YOU.*

So how will you respond? Take time this week to read through the prayer each day. Also take a look at some of the other teachings that were so important for Jesus to share with the disciples — *with you.*

### Questions & Readings for Daily Discovery or Group Discussion

#### Monday, May 29th

Jesus' prayer for his disciples is a deep, heartfelt prayer. But is it really for you?  
*John 17:20-24*

#### Tuesday, May 30th

What does Jesus' prayer and God's protection mean to you? *John 17:11 & 15*

#### Wednesday, May 31st

What does it mean to be in the world but not part of it? What does that mean for you?  
*John 17:13-19*

#### Thursday, June 1st

Before his prayer, Jesus talked about the Holy Spirit. How will this change the disciples' lives? Yours?  
*John 14:16-17 & 16:5-15*

#### Friday, June 2nd

If we love others with Jesus' love, what can we accomplish?  
*John 13:31-35 & 15:12-17*