



Redefining Expectations

April 06, 2025 Sermon Study Guide – Brian Bales Redefining Expectations: “We”over“Me” 4-6-25

“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. (John 17:20-23, ESV)

*I'm praying not only for them But also for those who will believe in me
Because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, So they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, So they'll be as unified and together as we are—I in them and you in me. Then they'll be mature in this oneness, And give the godless world evidence That you've sent me and loved them In the same way you've loved me. John 17:20-23 (The Message Paraphrase)*

A Life Application Study Guide

James 1:22-25 tells us to put into practice what we are discovering in God's word.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Jesus Prays for His Followers

- What do you imagine the disciples were expecting to experience as they gathered with Jesus in what would be their final meal together?

- Jesus prayed not only for His disciples but for you, over 2000 years ago in the upper room, the night before He was crucified. How does this impact you as you read it today?

- In what ways did His prayer provide for the disciples to live in a world without his physical presence?

- How does that same prayer provide for you today in 2025? Where do you see evidence in your life of the unity (one heart, one mind) that Jesus expects of us?

2. The Prayer of Modeling (v. 20-21)

- What was the primary expectation Jesus had for his followers in these verses? How do you see Jesus' disciples living this out in the NT? Where do you see gaps in unity even among the 12?

- How do you pursue unity in your relationships when there is discord, differing opinions or perspectives and even a competitive desire to *be first*?

- How does this verse inform our reality and how we navigate a fallen world and our own brokenness? *In the world you will have trouble - John 16:33a*

3. Elements of the “We”

- What groups can you think of today where people are clearly aligned, and model a “we” mindset?

- In what ways are these groups different from the unity Jesus is talking about in the Upper Room?

- In what ways are they the same?

4. An Unexpected Love (v. 22-23)

- In verse 23, Jesus says that the Father loves *us*. He loves you and me and all who have come before us and all who will follow us.

- How do you find yourself receiving this love from The Father and then extending it to those around you?

- When do you find yourself still thinking of God's love as transactional? In those moments, how are you treating others?

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. – 1 Pet. 4:8

- Consider how living out this command in 1 Peter could alter your relationships.

5. An Unexpected Agenda (1 Peter 4:10)

- How are you serving others as a steward of God's grace in your life?

