

Series: Things That Go Bump In The Night

Scripture and Background Information for August 30 – September 6.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll be looking at **John 17:20-26**. John 17 is the last chapter of Jesus' teaching session to his disciples. Right before Jesus was crucified, he prayed for his disciples. Even today, followers of Christ are still encouraged by the prayer.

Background for John 17:20-26

One theme runs through Jesus' last teaching session. Jesus is leaving his disciples, but not alone, as He promises another helper. Through the Holy Spirit's sending, Jesus could be with every believer at the same time at any place. Jesus' presence is the power which would lead his followers through a world of opposition.

Jesus closes his last teaching session with a prayer. The prayer can be divided into three sections. First, Jesus prays concerning Himself (17:1-5). Here, Jesus prays about the willingness of himself to glorify the Father and the Father's desire to glorify Jesus. Second, Jesus starts praying for his disciples (17:6-19). Here, he prays for their sanctification and protection in a world of opposition. Lastly, Jesus starts praying for all believers (17:20-26). He focuses on their unity to each other so that through unity, others might come to faith.

- When working through the passage, note recurring words in the whole chapter. They will give you a guideline for the explanation of our text. (*Example: compare the word "know" in verse 3 with verse 25-26*).
- When Jesus prays for his disciples (all believers) and their unity, what is the example for the unity they ought to express?
- How can we, as believers, have unity with each other? What does unity look like? Remember, this message began in chapter 13. There might be some information from previous chapters that will help you answer this question.
- What is the end of our unity? What use does it have?

Note, Jesus prayed for all believers. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, Jesus prayed for you. Remember, his prayer is focused on his relationship to us, and ours to him. At the same time, our relationship with him should influence our relationship with others.

Scriptures for upcoming weeks:

September 6-12

Mark 7:24-30

September 13-19

Acts 1