

7th Thursday of Easter “Oneness with Jesus”
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We are still in Jesus’ “Priestly Prayer” in the Gospel of St. John. The theology here is advanced. The goal of John’s Gospel is to help people believe in Jesus. However, the word “believe” is not used in the way you and I might use it. “Believing” in Jesus for John’s Gospel transforms the believer to become truly one with Christ, represented by the ideas of being born again by the waters of rebirth and by consuming the Body and Blood of the Lord. These are radical actions that underscore our calling to be truly one with Jesus. Here in our Gospel reading today we see the divine agenda. Jesus is talking about his desire for his disciples to become one with him as he is one with the Father. Again, believing in Jesus therefore has heavier weight than how we might use that word. Being one with Jesus makes us by John’s definition also one with the Father. This is how salvation is understood in this gospel.

Once this new reality of “oneness” takes hold in the hearts of the disciples after the resurrection, the disciples become Apostles. The term “Apostle” comes from a word that literally means “sent”. And so, when an Apostle showed up in your town...what it meant was, he was sent for you by God for the purpose make making you one with Christ and therefore one with the Father. This also, by definition, makes us actually one with the Church. For the Gospel of St. John, all of it (you, me, the Church) we are called to more than just a mere concept of “unity” as we might understand it. There is an actual ontology at work in this Gospel calling us all to be truly one with Jesus in a mystical way. This is how, by the way, we can understand what Jesus means when he says that he not only the Good Shepherd but also the Gate for the sheep.

You see, the instinct at work in John’s Gospel is this: since only God can save us, salvation consists of all of us becoming one with God. This is accomplished because Jesus being one with the Father has also become one with us. Because the idea of oneness with Jesus is more than a mere concept and more like an ontological change, when the Body of Christ is, by definition, truly one with Jesus in his passion and death, the Body of Christ is also one with him in his resurrection and eternal life. This is how salvation is understood in the Gospel of St. John.

Therefore, a meditation for today could be: what areas of my life are truly one with Jesus right now? What areas of my life are not? What is that one thing I can do today that will help me come closer to my vocation of “oneness” with the Lord?