

1.27.19 ~ John 17:11-19,
Jesus Prays for His Disciples: Part Two

Jesus is praying for these 11 men, not because of any inherent qualities or talents they might possess or acquire, but because these men are gifts to Him from the Father (see **John 17:9-10**).

Read John 17:1... Jesus is going to be leaving this world, going back to the Father in heaven; but the disciples are remaining in the world. In just a few hours from the time Jesus prayed this prayer, He would complete His mission.

Jesus speaks here as if it has already happened, i.e., He will be gone, they will still be here. In fact, they will be witnesses of all that Jesus said and did, and honestly, if it were not for the faithful sharing of the gospel of Christ by these men, there would be no Church, because there wouldn't be any believers and followers of Christ.

The world in which the disciples would remain will be hostile toward them because of Christ (see **John 15:18-19; 16:33**), and so, Jesus prays for the Father to protect them and to keep them in His name, addressing Him as Holy Father (a title used nowhere else in Scripture), for He is talking about the holiness of God, which belongs to Jesus Christ as well, for He is God; and in fact He came down from heaven to show the Father to us (see **John 1:18; 14:7**).

This had to be encouraging to the disciples, to hear the Lord praying to God the Father on their behalf, in order for them to know God's presence, protection and power (see **1 Peter 1:3-5; Romans 8:38-39**); but also, so that they be one [united in fellowship], just as Christ and the Father are one.

Jesus is praying for His men, that as believers, indwelt by God's Spirit, their common bond will be a love for the Lord, and a desire to know and obey His Word, because they share eternal life through Him.

Read John 17:2-16... Jesus has protected and guarded these 11 from Satan, and the world ruled by him. The only one of the original 12 who was lost [perished] was Judas, the son of perdition [one who will not repent, but instead will suffer eternal damnation].

Judas was a false disciple, who willfully turned against Christ (see **John 13:18**, this is a picture from Psalm 41:9, where David speaks of being betrayed by one who shared a meal with him, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.")

Jesus was a protective shepherd to these 11 men, watching over them completely, so they would not come to harm. He is praying to the Father that these men might have His complete joy in them, the eternal life made possible by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross.

Jesus had given them God's Word and they had received and believed it (**John 17:8**), whereas the world had rejected the message of Christ, and so it hated Christ's disciples, for they were not of this world.

Notice (**John 17:15**), Jesus isn't asking the Father to take them out of this world, but that they would know oneness with the Father and victory in this world because of Christ.

1John 2:15, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Christians are to reach the lost of the world with the gospel of Christ (see **Romans 10:13-14; 2Corinthians 5:18-20**).

Satan desires to destroy the work of God, to disable Christians through temptations, doubt, fear, etc., and so Jesus prays that the Father would keep them from evil (**verse 15**); for true faith in God, which comes from God, cannot be destroyed. Peter is a great example of this, for he failed horribly, even denying the Lord three times (see **Matthew 26:34-35, 69-75**).

Peter failed, then repented and Jesus restored him. He became the first preacher of the message of Christ, in Jerusalem (see **Acts 2:22-24, 32-33, 36-38**).

In **John 17:16** Jesus reiterates what he said in **verse 14**, that His disciples do not belong to this world, just as He doesn't. Jesus was persecuted by unbelievers, and His disciples will be also; but they will have the Father's protection and love, as did Christ (**John 17:23**).

Read John 17:17-19... Jesus prays that the disciples will be sanctified in and through the Word of God, the Word of Truth; set apart from sin to righteousness as they (**Romans 12:1-2**), "present [their] bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is [their] spiritual service of worship," "[being] transformed by the renewing of [their] mind(s), so that [they] may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

The "Word" spoken of here (**verse 17**) is the whole Bible, Old and New Testaments. When Jesus was in the upper room with His disciples, He told the eleven that the rest of His Word to be revealed would be done so through them (see **John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:12-15**).

In John 17 Jesus prays for these men to be sanctified, set apart as belonging to God, for the ultimate glory of God (**Ephesians 1:13; 1Corinthians 12:13**).

Only Spirit indwelt, sanctified, believers can represent Christ in the world; Jesus is providing a kind of preview of what He will say to the believers after His resurrection, before He ascends back to the Father (see **Acts 1:1-9**; cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-49; John 20:21-23).

These men would continue the work of Christ, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that Christ commanded them.

Just as Jesus (cf **John 17:18**) had been sent into the world by God the Father, they would now be sent into the world by God the Son. Jesus is about to sanctify Himself by going to the cross as the Lamb of God, sacrificing Himself in order to take away the condemnation of sin in the world, for all who will believe in Him.

Jesus is the Truth of God, and all those who believe in and follow Him will be sanctified in and through Him, having been justified and made righteous (**2Corinthians 5:21**), "He [the Father] made Him [the Son] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

What a glorious expression of Christ's love for these believers, as He prays to His Father in heaven. These men, sovereignly guarded by God the Father, modeled to and prayed for by God the Son, indwelt by God the Holy Spirit, would proclaim the message of Christ (**Acts 1:8**), "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Next week we will turn our attention to the portion of this prayer where Jesus prays for all who will come to believe in Him through the witness of these first Christians, (**John 17:20**), "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word."

Pastor Mike
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