



Not Of The World; Sent To The World

March 14, 2021

Text: John 17:14-19

This week, we are taking a pause with our verse by verse messages in Matthew. My prayer is for our church to be strengthened and encouraged by the Word of God this morning.

Setting the context

Today's verses 14 - 19 are in the middle of what many call Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer."

- The High Priest is the highest rank of all the priests (Leviticus 21:10.)
- Among other duties, the high priest was the only priest allowed to perform the service on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16.) The high priest was the only priest authorized to bring blood into the holy of holies to sprinkle on the mercy seat. This was to make atonement for the sins of all the people during the last year.
- As New Testament Christians, we have the benefit of seeing Jesus as the Chief High Priest who has made atonement for our sins once and for all. (Hebrews 9:1-28)
- Jesus' intercession on behalf of the disciples and the coming church in our text today is one way he serves as our high priest.

This prayer concludes a lengthy teaching after Jesus and His disciples:

1. Enjoyed the Passover Meal (John 13:2)
2. Jesus washed the disciples feet (John 13:4-5)
3. Judas gets dismissed by Jesus (John 13:21-30)
4. Peter's denial was foretold (John 13:38)

Some noteworthy points Jesus shared with the disciples:

1. He encouraged their hearts (John 14:1)
2. He is the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father but by Him (John 14:6)
3. He and the Father are one (John 14:10)
4. Those who love Him would keep His commandments (John 14:15)
5. He would send the Holy Spirit (John 14:16)
6. He is the true vine (vine imparts strength and life to its branches), and the Father is the husbandman (i.e. tiller of the soil, a vinedresser, farmer)
7. Branches that don't bear fruit are taken away: branches that do are purged to be more productive (John 15:2)
8. Branches can't bear fruit itself, they have to be connected to the vine (John 15:4-6)
9. The Father is glorified when the disciples bear much fruit (John 15:8)
10. Jesus' aim with this teaching was the disciples joy (John 15:11)
11. Disciples are commanded to love one another the way Jesus loved them (John 15:12)
12. The disciples did not choose Jesus, but He chose them. He chose them to go bear fruit (John 15:16)
13. The disciples being chosen by Jesus put them at odds with the world (John 15:18-19)
14. The disciples should expect persecution (John 15:20)
15. There were things Jesus left unsaid because the disciples weren't ready (John 16:12)

16. The Holy Spirit would reveal these things in time (John 16:13)
17. The disciples would feel deep pain (Jesus death), but their sorrow would be turned into joy (Jesus' resurrection) (John 16:20)

Jesus Prays for himself (John 17:1-5)

1. Jesus starts the prayer asking the Father to glorify him. (John 17:1)
 - a. Jesus' death on the cross would glorify Him (John 12:27-33; John 21:18-19)
 - b. This wasn't selfish. He asked because this would glorify the Father (John 17:1)
2. Jesus declares his deity (John 17:2-3)
 - a. He has power over all flesh
 - b. He will give eternal life to all the Father gave him (Particular Atonement)
 - c. Eternal life is to know the Father and the Son.
3. Jesus restates his request to be glorified. (John 17:4-5)
 - a. Jesus glorified the Father throughout his life (He did not falter in one aspect of the Law.) (Theologians call this "Active Obedience.")
 - b. Jesus saw the work of the cross as "finished." (Revelation 13:8 calls Jesus the "Lamb who was slain before the world was made.")
 - c. With the work complete, it was time for Jesus to pick up the glory possessed before taking on flesh.

Jesus prays for the disciples (John 17:6-19)

1. Jesus states his accomplishments with the disciples (John 17:6)
 - a. Jesus not only taught them about God, he manifested (displayed) the nature of God to them.
2. Jesus prayed for them. Not the world (John 17:9)
 - a. This wasn't a "general" prayer. He was focused on his disciples.
 - b. It's not that he didn't care about the world.
3. Jesus makes a request (John 17:11)
 - a. This was necessary because he was leaving them after three intense years of discipleship (John 17:11a)
 - b. They needed to be kept.
 - i. Their efforts wouldn't be enough. They needed the power of God to remain.
 - c. The keeping power of God also would keep them unified with one another similar to how the Triune God exists (Father, Son, & Spirit in perfect unity). This would be necessary since the temptation to scatter after Jesus' arrest would be great.
 - d. Jesus kept them while he walked with his disciples. He kept them in the "Name" or by the authority of the Father. (John 17:12)
 - e. Jesus speaks on Judas Iscariot, whose greed led to his death, and fulfilled prophecy (Psalm 41:9; Psalm 109:8)
 - f. Jesus was concerned about the disciples joy (John 17:13)

Today's Text

John 17:14 (KJV) I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

- Jesus was faithful to give and live the word!
- He saw himself as a messenger. How much more should we see ourselves as messengers instead of originators? How many teachers are bent on having the “newest” revelation or teaching? Beware that new shiny revelation just might be old heresy in a new package.
- Jesus giving the word (and the disciples receiving) led to hatred from “the world.”
 - What is “the world?”
 - In this instance, world means: The ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ.
- Why would the “world” hate the disciples for simply receiving the word?
 - A quick look at some acts of persecution recorded in scripture, it’s clear that the world didn’t have an issue with a person simply “believing.” The issue is that those who believe shared a message that is contrary to the world. This message was and is the gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - The parents of the man born blind and healed by Jesus (John 9:22)
 - Peter and John (Acts 4:3-18)
 - Apostles (Acts 5:18-42)
 - Stephen (Acts 6:9-15)
 - James the brother of John (Acts 12:2)
- Among other things, Jesus serves as an example to every Christian. Just as the disciples who walked with Jesus followed his example, we too are called to do the same.

John 17:15 (KJV) I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

- In spite of being hated by the world and the subsequent suffering, Jesus did not pray for them to be taken out of the world. There was work for the disciples to accomplish.
- Ellicott's Commentary states:
The Christian ideal is not freedom from work, but strength to do it; not freedom from temptation, but power to overcome it; not freedom from suffering, but joy in an abiding sense of the Father’s love; not absence from the world, but grace to make the world better for our presence; not holy lives driven from the world, and living apart from it, but holy lives spent in the world and leavening it.
- The final section of this verse is probably better stated, “*keep them from the evil one.*”
 - This speaks to the Christian persevering in the faith.

John 17:16 (KJV) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world

- Jesus restates John 17:14
 - The Word doesn’t repeat itself for the sake of repeating. It is to reiterate a point since we are prone to forget.

John 17:17 (KJV) Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

- Sanctify is to set apart and devote to God. What are we separated from?

- Worldliness and all of its corruptions. We are separated from that which is “common.”
- This sanctification is not solely up to the disciples. We have the help of God.
- The driving force behind sanctification is “truth.”
- Jesus goes on to state that the word of God is “Truth.”
 - Reading, Hearing, Singing, & Applying the Word directly correlates to our sanctification.

John 17:18 (KJV) As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

- Jesus was sent by the Father to complete a mission. Upon completion, Jesus sent his disciples to complete a mission.
 - The Great Commission: Matthew 28:16-20
- Spurgeon said:

“Christ was the great Missionary, the Messiah, the Sent One; we are the minor missionaries, Sent out into the world to accomplish the Father’s will and purpose.”

John 17:19 (KJV) And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

- Jesus set Himself apart for the work of the cross so the disciples could be made holy.

Closing thoughts:

1. Jesus made a point to not only teach the disciples about the Father with words, but he also lived it out in front of them. Parents, can your children say this about you? Children, can your parents say this about you? Singles, can the people in your sphere of influence say this about you?
2. Jesus was concerned about the disciple’s unity after he was gone. Do you walk in unity with the brothers and sisters in your local church? Do you scatter after Bishop says amen with no thought or contact with fellow brothers and sisters during the week? It mattered to Jesus, so should it matter to you?
3. Are you really ok with being “hated” by the world because of Jesus and the implications of the gospel? You might say amen with your mouth, but do your actions and heart agree with your mouth?
4. Are you ok with hearing that Jesus didn’t ask for you to be taken out of the world with all of the trouble and persecution that he definitely knows you will face?
5. Jesus says that you are not of the world. Do you see this as a blessing? If not, I urge you to search yourself to see if you are truly in the faith.
6. Ask the LORD for an insatiable hunger for His Word. You’re being set apart to be used for Kingdom purposes is at stake.
7. Go and make disciples! Run from the comfort of your safe places. We have been saved to serve!

May the Word of our LORD ring true and spur us to action.