

Greetings! As we look at **Jn. 17**, we see an intimate prayer by Jesus with His Father. This is in the setting of Jesus dealing with His 11 apostles before He leaves to prepare a place for them and to send to them (and us) the Holy Spirit. He begins by praying for Himself, that He may be glorified (:1-5); then He prays for the 11 apostles, that they may be protected and sanctified (:6-19); and finally He prays for the whole Church down through the centuries, that we all may be unified and glorified (:20-26). We hear Jesus' heart for His Father, the 11 apostles, and us! In this study we'll look at His prayer for His 11 apostles. First, He prays for them because they are His own; then He prays that they may be kept from the enemy (the world and the devil); and finally He prays that they may be sanctified. We'll learn a lot from Jesus' prayer on why and how to pray for ourselves and even others.

Read 17:1-26. :6 **“I have manifested (revealed; aorist) Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word (logos, being the expression of a thought).”** He begins with a review of ‘His own’ (:6-12). He identifies them as those whom the Father had given to Him and who had kept His word. “Father, I have revealed Your name—Your character, Your essential nature—to these men.” The supreme manifestation of the Father’s name was Jesus Himself. God’s OT name ‘Yahweh’ was so sacred to the Jews that they refused to pronounce it, yet Jesus not only manifested His Father’s name, but He also claimed it for Himself (**4:26, 8:24,28,58**). Jesus had made His Father’s name known by His person/works/words. The world is all the unsaved who oppose God and His kingdom. “Father, You gave Me these 11 men; they are Yours; they’ve kept/ obeyed Your word. Thank You, Father, for these men.”

:7-8 **“Now they have come to know [1097] that everything You have given Me is from You.” :8 for the words (rhēma) which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received *them* and truly understood (1097, came to know) that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.** The exact words You gave Me I’ve given to them. They received My words as Your words. As a result, they’ve come to know I’ve come from You and are convinced You sent Me.” They received/understood/believed!

:9 **“I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours [they belong to You];”** “Jesus’ words are a sample of the continued intercession that constitutes His present ministry (**read Rom. 8:34, Heb. 7:25**.)” These men were the Father’s gift to Him. He couldn’t pray for the world what He asks for the 11. (This doesn’t mean Jesus had no concern for the world. It was for the world that He shortly would die. And, He would send His disciples into the world to reach it **17:20**).

:10 **and all things that are Mine are Yours [everything that is Mine is Yours], and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.”** What a oneness between Jesus and His Father! Again (after **17:1,4,5**) we see the word ‘glory’. These men (and all believers) would be and still are one way by which the world would know the essence/nature/heart of who Jesus and the Father are.

:11 **“I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You [I am returning to You]. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.”** Jesus is praying specifically for these men, as those whom the Father had given Him (:6-10) and as those He was about to leave (:11-19). :11-19 includes two requests for these men: that they would be kept, spiritually protected (:11), and that they’d be sanctified (:17). “Keep, guard, protect them. They’re in Your hands.” Peter speaks in **1 Pet. 1:5** about being **“protected by the power of God.”** Jude ends his letter with these words (:24): **“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.”**

Remember, the Father is the Vinedresser. These men would face the blind, unbelieving, perishing world and the ruler of this world, the devil. (They would also face the urges of the flesh.) “I’ll be no longer in the world in My physical body, but they will be, so I’m coming to You, Holy Father (a title for God found only here). Keep them, protect them.” He’s appealing to something that the Father Himself wants. Jesus’ confidence was in the character, power, and love of His Father. “The striking reality of Jesus’ prayer is that it is not designed to change God’s will, but to call for its fulfillment.” **Keep them in Your name**, representing all that He is. He’s holy and our Father.

That they may be one even as We are! Unity! Keep them from disunity (they had just that evening argued on who was the greatest among them! **Lk. 22:24**). Our oneness springs from the Life that is imparted to all believers by the new birth. In **Eph. 4:3** it is clear that the unity is already given, not something to be achieved! That they may remain united in love (**13:35**).

:12 **“While I was with them [As long as I was with them], I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished (fully destroyed) but the son of perdition [except the one headed for destruction; Hebrew idiom for one destined to perish; applied to the Antichrist in 2 Th. 2:3], so that the Scripture [51X, always the Bible] would be fulfilled.”** Jesus is asking the Father to simply do what He Himself had been doing. During His entire ministry, by means of His life and teaching and works, Jesus had fulfilled His task as the Good Shepherd of the sheep. Jesus had been completely faithful to the task assigned Him. He had kept and guarded them.

Not one perished but the son of perdition (see **6:70-71, 13:2,18,27, Lk. 22:3, Mt. 26:24-25**). What Judas Iscariot and Satan (**13:27**) intended for evil, God in His perfect purposes worked together for good.

Read :13-19. :13 **“But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that (hina) they may have My joy made full in themselves [so they would be filled completely with My(!) joy]. I’m coming to You, speaking Your words to them so they may have the fullest joy!”** Review **15:11, 16:20-24**.

:14 **“I have given them Your word (logos); and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world [they do not belong to the world, just as I don’t belong to the world].”** Again Jesus mentions

‘Your word’ (also :6,17), the whole message of God. Jesus had given them God’s word (logos), which the world rejected (5:38). As Jesus asked in 5:46-47, “If you don’t believe Moses’ writings, how will you believe My words?” God’s word was the cause of division. The world hates God’s followers because we follow Jesus and speak and practice God’s Word and words. Remember, the world demands conformity to its viewpoint and practices. But our citizenship is no longer of the world but in heaven (Phil. 3:20, 1 Pet. 2:11). We’ve been born of the Spirit and are God’s children (1:12, 3:8). Therefore, we don’t (or shouldn’t) have the world’s mindset; we want God’s!

:15 **“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from (out of) the evil one. Evil:** The word can be neuter (from ‘evil’) or masculine (from the ‘evil one’). See 1 Jn. 2:13, 3:12, 5:18. As head of the world system, as god of this world, the devil seeks to destroy even the name of Jesus plus he wants to destroy believers and absolute Truth. Remember 8:44: he’s a murderer and a liar; there is no truth in him! Even that evening, Jesus had spoken several times about the devil (14:30, 16:11). Also see Eph. 2:2.

So Jesus begins, first, with protection from disunity (:11). Now He prays that the disciples may be protected from the evil one. He restates the basic request of :11, that while they live on the earth the Father would keep them from the evil one. Jesus is praying for protection/insulation, not isolation, not to be separate from it (as we’ll see), but to be a different group in the midst of it! So Jesus asked for unity (:11) and for preservation from evil (:15). Just think, if taken ‘out of’ the world, the world would be left without Light and Truth and Love and Life. There is great purpose in us still remaining on this earth. So yes, the apostles would be hated because the world hates Jesus but we’re clearly not to isolate ourselves from the world. “Father, unite them; keep them.” What a way to pray for each other, for every believer, for ourselves.

:16 **“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world** [They are no more of the world than I am]. As such, they would face opposition and persecution. The unbelieving world doesn’t want Jesus or God’s truth! They demand conformity to its pressures; they walk by the flesh; they are under Satan’s control. Yet believers aren’t like this. We’re not of the world.

:17 **“Sanctify them [make them holy] in the truth; Your word (logos) is truth.** Sanctify = to make holy, sacred, set apart for sacred duty, separate, different (distinct). It means to be set apart for God and His purposes, to dedicate to or put to an intended use. How? By the truth: Jesus is the truth and so is God’s Word. **Your Word is truth.** God’s Word and truth are synonymous. “Jesus saw the OT Scriptures as the word of God (Mt. 15:6, 22:29-32) and affirmed their inerrancy (Mt. 5:18, Jn. 10:35) and historical accuracy. He further saw the OT as being perfectly fulfilled in Himself (Mt. 5:17, Lk. 24:27, Jn. 5:39, 13:18, Acts 13:27). During His ministry, Jesus viewed His own words as words from God (Jn. 7:16, 8:26-28,38, 12:49, 14:10,24). He promised the 11 that through them the rest of His Word would be revealed (14:26, 15:26-27, 16:12-15).” All of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation is God’s truth, and, Jesus is the embodiment of the Father and His truth. Simply believe that Jesus

and what God has written are the truth. The Word would be the source of truth for these men when Jesus was no longer personally with them. The heart of worldliness is suppression or denial of the Truth (the Father’s self-disclosure in His Son, His words in the Bible). And, if we aren’t growing in the knowledge of the Word of God, it’s only a question of time before the world will move in and take over our thinking; even though we’re Christians, we’ll conform to the world and its way of operation. Like Peter says in 1 Pet. 2:2, **Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word (logikon, logical, reasonable), so that by it [the Word] you may grow in respect to salvation.**

:18 “[Just] **As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.** Father, just as You sent Me into this world, I have sent them into the world. Just as I was set apart for You and Your purposes, so I’ve sent these 11 into the world for the same purposes, to spread the good news of You, Me, Your truth. I’m not asking them to do what I haven’t done.” Jesus was the Father’s message, living among people right where they were. So are we! “Our attitude is to be one of mission, the mission articulated in 20:31 and explained in 13:20 and 15:26-27.” Just as God so loved the world that He sent, so Jesus sent the 11 (and us) into this world to share His truth and love. They would be sent, just as Jesus was. We set-apart and sent-ones should be a united community of believers and share Jesus and the Word as God’s Truth!

:19 **For their sakes I sanctify (make holy) Myself, that (hina) they themselves also may be sanctified (made holy) in truth [true to fact].**” Jesus’ prayer for them was that the Father would keep them and they’d be sanctified by His truth. For the sake of His followers, Jesus would be set apart and made sin on the cross to make salvation possible for the 11 and those who would be saved through their ministries. Jesus was totally set apart for the Father’s will (4:34, 5:19, 6:38, 7:16). This was the perfect act of love and obedience to His Father. His sacred duty was to offer up His own body. His example, especially demonstrated on the cross, would be the standard by which to evaluate sanctification. Then that life of Jesus would be manifested through us as we believe and follow Him in the fullness of the Spirit (2 Cor. 4:10-11).

Swindoll: “Prayer helps us remember that any God-honoring endeavor will succeed because of His power, not ours. The Father drew them; Jesus kept them. We are part of His redemptive plan, not the other way around. Prayer causes us to look to God for success rather than to the world.”

In Jesus and His prayer, we see His heart for His followers, His heart for us! Imagine hearing Jesus approach the Father on our behalf. What a relief, having Jesus praying even today on our behalf (Rom. 8:34, Heb. 7:25). “Guarded and set apart by the Father, interceded for by Jesus, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, these men, along with the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 15:8), would provide the solid foundation upon which all believers in the ages to come would rest (Eph. 2:20).” May we continue to be impacted by Jesus’ prayer for His own. In :20-26, Jesus will turn His prayer toward future generations of believers (us!). What have you learned from Jesus’ prayer? Joel

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NOTES :14 God had spoken through His Son (**Heb. 1:1-2, Jn. 1:1,18**).

:12 The OT Scripture revealed the necessity of Jesus' suffering and death (**Lk. 24:25-26**).

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:7 **Now they have come to know [realize?] that everything You have given Me is from You [everything I have is a gift from You],**

:8 **for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me [they are convinced that You sent Me].**

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:10 **and all things that are Mine are Yours [everything that is Mine is Yours], and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them [so they bring Me glory].**

:11 **I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You [I am returning to You]. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.**

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Is sanctified tied to Holy Father in :11?

:18 [Just] **As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.**

:19 **For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that (hina?) they themselves also may be sanctified [made holy] in truth."**

NLT 6 "I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything I have is a gift from you, 8 for I have passed on to them the message you gave me. They accepted it and know that I came from you, and they believe you sent me. 9 "My prayer is not for the world, but for those you have given me, because they belong to you. 10 All who are mine belong to you, and you have given them to me, so they bring me glory. 11 Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are. 12 During my time here, I protected them by the power of the name you gave me. I guarded them so that not one was lost, except the one headed for destruction, as the Scriptures foretold. 13 "Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy. 14 I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to this world any more than I do. 17 Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. 18 Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. 19 And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth.

JBP 5 "I have brought you honor upon earth, I have completed the task which you gave me to do. Now, Father, honor me in your own presence with the glory that I knew with you before the world was made. 6 I have shown yourself to the men whom you gave me from the world. They were your men and you gave them to me, and they have accepted your word. 7 Now they realize that all that you have given me comes from you—8 and that every message that you gave me I have given them. They have accepted it all and have come to know in their hearts that I did come from you—they are convinced that you sent me. 9 "I am praying to you for them: I am not praying for the world but for the men whom you gave me, for they are yours—10 everything that is mine is yours and yours mine—and they have done me honor. 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world and I am returning to you. Holy Father, keep the men you gave me by your power that they may be one, as we are one. 12 As long as I was with them I kept them by the power that you gave me; I guarded them, and not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction—that the scripture might come true. 13 "And now I come to you and I say these things in the world that these men may find my joy completed in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, for they are no more sons of the world than I am. 15 I am not praying that you will take them out of the world but that you will keep them from the evil one. 16 They are no more the sons of the world than I am—17 make them holy by the truth; for your word is the truth. 18 I have sent them to the world just as you sent me to the world 19 and I consecrate myself for their sakes that they may be made holy by the truth.