

"Sanctify Them"

John 17:9-20

- We'll spend some time in a passage today that is commonly referred to as "the high priestly prayer"
- It is a prayer of Jesus for His disciples
- The primary aspect we will highlight is His prayer for their sanctification
- To be sanctified is to be separated from profane things and dedicated to God
- To be purified for use by God
- This was Jesus' prayer for His disciples on this day
- And for those who, by their testimony, would be led to Him
- Even those who have faith in Jesus in our day
- Including us!

- "Sanctify Them," our theme from John 17:9-20

- Jesus is well into His prayer by the time we reach verse 9
- It is clear His disciples are the subject of the prayer throughout
- He will expand beyond His group of twelve later
- Here's where we start...

John 17:9

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

- It's not that the world wasn't worthy of prayer
- The believer must always have a global perspective
- Jesus makes that clear to us in a myriad of ways through the New Testament
- But at this moment He is focused on His own
- Those which the Father had given Him
- Those which were the Father's

John 17:10

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

- The commitment the disciples had to Jesus was evidence of their faith in God
- Their service for Jesus was service to God
- They belonged to God
- And they were showing forth His attributes in the world
- Glorifying Him

John 17:11

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

- The time is quickly approaching when He will no longer be with them
- He will die, be buried, raise again from the dead, be seen of them, give them their commission, then rejoin His Father in heaven
- But He is confident God will keep them in His absence
- And He will give them a unity that resembles the unity of God the Father and God the Son

John 17:12

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

- None of them has perished or "gone to destruction"
- Save for Judas
- Judas is referred to as the "son of perdition"
- Or the "man of sin"
- The betrayer of Jesus
- The scripture is fulfilled when he acts in betrayal

John 17:13

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

- The Easy to Read Version helps us on this passage
- It says...

"I am coming to you now. But I pray these things while I am still in the world. I say all this so that these followers can have the true happiness that I have. I want them to be completely happy."

- Their joy would come in serving the Father, just as Jesus had done
- Not in fulfilling their own desires, but in fulfilling His
- And this would make them truly happy
- While the world, the flesh, and the devil would tell us exactly the opposite
- This can't be refuted in light of scripture
- Total commitment to God's will makes for a joy-filled person
- In spite of all circumstances, which may not be good
- And no matter the cost, disciples of His are fulfilled by giving up their lives to Him

John 17:14

14 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 has equipped His disciples
- But they have been met with hatred in the world
- As He explains, this is because of their foreignness
- Anyone with faith in Him is not of this world

- We are children of God, eternal residents of heaven
- With another King and with a different purpose
- A purpose that angers so many who are at home within the world's system
- But He says...

John 17:15

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

- Jesus does not pray for our escape from the difficulties of this world
- Even when we are treated unfairly and hated without reason
- Even when in the midst of persecution
- But He rather prays for our righteousness and integrity
- To be kept from evil and from "the evil one"

John 17:16

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

- This is why we often face so much trial
- Why His disciples in that day faced so much trial
- They were foreign, just pilgrims
- And now we come to the sanctification portion...

John 17:17

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

- Let's rehearse the meaning of this word "sanctify"
- It means to be "separated from profane things and dedicated to God"
- To be purified for use by God
- It is a growth in spiritual maturity that comes, not from being delivered in moments of trial, but through walking in moments of trial fully reliant upon the Savior
- And how do we maintain this reliance?
- Though His word
- We read it, we obey it, it shapes our perspectives and attitudes
- And it allows our relationship with Him to deepen, despite the harsh realities we face
- As we are being sanctified, we have a mission...

John 17:18-20

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

- This is where the prayer reaches to us, who believe in Him today
- Those who know the gospel because of the disciples' witness
- Through their testimonies and their writings of Him, which are God-breathed
- And Jesus set Himself apart to minister to them
- To be their Messiah
- And He sent them, just as He sends us into the world
- To testify of His saving grace, which is for all men

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