

SCRIPTURE:

John 17:6-19

SERMON:

Robert Murray M'Cheyne, a pastor in Scotland during the 1800's, died at 29 years old after contracting typhus from visiting and ministering in England. His friend and biographer Andrea Bonar published a biography about him, including many of his sermons and letters, and God used it to fan flame devotion to Christ from his life.

One of the things that M'Cheyne said that I've never forgotten relates to our passage today: ***"If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet distance makes no difference. He is praying for me."*** If we could physically hear with our own ears, Jesus praying for us in the next room, we wouldn't fear a million enemies. If we heard Christ praying to the Father specifically for our lives, we would live with fear of anything. But M'Cheyne reminds us, distance makes no difference. Whether He is in the room next door or in Heaven, He is praying for us. He is praying for me. He is praying for you. Therefore, we shouldn't fear a million enemies.

The point M'Cheyne makes is that if we understood that the Savior intercedes for us, we would live very differently than what we often do. The beauty of our passage today is that we are getting a glimpse and the sound of our Savior's prayers for us. The gift of John 17 is we do hear what He says, and we have an indication of what He continues praying.

Exegesis: John 17:6-19

This is the continuation of Jesus' prayer that we started looking at last week. In vs 1-5, Jesus prays for himself. The hour has come. His death to save sinners, planned from the foundation of the world, had arrived. He prays to the Father to glorify the Son as the Son glorifies the Father (through that death). Jesus has all authority over mankind, and with that authority, He gives eternal life to the sheep that Father had given Him. He then prays for the glory He had before the incarnation to be restored to Him when He ascends.

Now we move from focus on Jesus, to a focus on his disciples/apostles.

VS 6 -- “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

Jesus "manifested" the Father's name. What does this mean? It means He showed it, displayed it. Who did He manifest it to? To the people the Father gave Him out of the world. We know from the context of the rest of the passage that this is specifically speaking about the 12. Jesus acknowledges that they were His (the Father's) and He gave them to Jesus.

What has marked them? They have kept the Father's Word. Follow this closely. One of the evidences of those who truly belong to the Father is they keep His Word (through Jesus' teaching). They obey it. They uphold it.

Luke 6:46 -- “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do what I tell you?

1 John 2:3-6 -- 3 And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. 4 Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, 5 but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: 6 whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

VS 7-8 -- 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

The disciples know the connection Jesus has to the Father. They believe Jesus came from Heaven (incarnation). They believe He is the promised One of the Old Testament. The Messiah.

VS 9 -- I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

Jesus distinguishes that His prayer and intercession is particularly for them, those given to Him, not for the world. What He means by "the world" is all people in the world. He's not praying for humanity in general, but His chosen and set apart people. They are God's people.

We are confronted again with the reality that there is a distinction throughout Scripture of those who belong to God and those who don't. And there is something in the origin of those who belong to God that dates back to God's eternal decrees. There is a mystery here that we don't always know what to do with and it can fry your brain cells if you linger too long. But there are a people that have eternally been God's. And they come into possession of all He has secured for them in time and history through the preaching of the gospel. But they come because they are His. That's who Jesus is praying for here.

VS 10 -- All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

All that are Jesus' are the Father's, and Jesus is glorified in them. As they place faith in Jesus, deny themselves, and obey Him, Jesus is gloried in them. This is why we talk about showing Jesus as incomparably glorious around here. That's how we do it.

VS 11 -- And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.

Jesus speaks as if He is no longer in the world. We know He is. In fact, He is hours from His death, followed by His resurrection, and 40 days later, His ascension. But in His own mind and prayer, He is praying about what is soon to take place. He is speaking as if it were already done.

The Lord knows what the plans are and what is going to happen, so His prayers are in alignment with that. This is important for us to remember about the Lord. We don't know everything that is going to happen. But Jesus does. And He prays for us in light of what is coming, even when we don't know.

Jesus is no longer going to be in the world, but His disciples are. He is interceding for the 12 here. He asks God to keep them (sustain them, perseverance). He also prays that they may be one even as the Father and the Son are one. Jesus' prayer is for them to remain in the faith and unified with one another.

VS 12 -- While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Jesus acknowledges that while He was with them (during His earthly ministry) He kept them. He guarded them. How? He taught them the truth, interceded for them, fended off Satan, rebuked and disciplined them. The result of this is He didn't lose any that were given to them...EXCEPT. There's an exception. The son of destruction, Judas, was lost. That the Scripture might be fulfilled.

This is important to discuss. Jesus did not lose any of the sheep that were given to Him by the Father. The only one that was lost, the exception, was the one that was dedicated to destruction and the fulfillment of Scripture. How was Jesus a fulfillment of Scripture?

Psalm 41:9 -- Even my close friend whom I trusted, the one who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.

David had been betrayed by one he shared a meal with. But like much of the Old Testament, and the Psalms, there is a prophecy here. He's writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and is saying more than what he even realizes. We know this because when Jesus is sharing the Passover Meal with his 12 disciples, he says this:

John 13:18 -- I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.'

So after Jesus speaks about them being clean and caveating that not all of them were (speaking of Judas), we hear him speak about those that were chosen, but not all were chosen. Then He quotes Psalm 41:9 to speak of Judas.

Why is this so important? Because Jesus' intercession and efforts to keep His disciples didn't fail. He didn't lose any given to Him. The only exception is the one disciple that was never chosen for that role, but was a son of destruction. The King James Version calls him a son of perdition. D.A. Carson suggests that this refers to both his character and his destiny. The phrase means "man doomed to destruction."

Here's the reality: Jesus' interceding prayer and keeping power does not fail. He cannot lose any that are His (Jesus says this in John 6, 10, 18 and here). This is a common theme. Those that are His will not fall away ultimately BECAUSE of His intercession. When Jesus tells Peter that Satan has asked to sift him, but that He has prayed for Peter. What does He say? When you turn again, strengthen your brothers. In other words, you are going to fall away for a period of time, but when you turn again, strengthen them. Jesus knows Peter won't stay away because He has prayed for Him. He intercedes for Him. This is

confidence and assurance for us and our loved ones. We also know that when we see people fall away or walk away, it may be that they were never of us (1 John 2:19) or that they will turn back. How do we know this? Because Jesus says He doesn't lose His own. He keeps them and guards them. While He was with them, and now that He is leaving.

This intercession exists for you right now as well.

Romans 8:34 -- *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.*

Hebrews 7:25 -- *Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.*

Take heart. Do you know why your sins are forgiven though you may stumble, stray, and fall? He intercedes for you. I heard recently of a young believer who shortly after coming to faith and being baptized veered off into some habitual sin. It begins to make you wonder if their salvation was sincere and true. But then the individual turned away from their sin and recognized they had strayed. How does this happen? The Lord never stops interceding for His sheep. Take confidence today, friends. And ask the Lord to specifically intercede for loved ones that you have.

VS 13-14 -- *13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.*

He's going to Heaven, and He is saying these things while He is still in the world. The goal is that they will have Jesus' joy in them. The gospel comes and joy comes with it (cf. 1 John 1: 1-4).

Jesus has given them the Father's Word, and the world hates them because they don't walk in step with it. The world hates the light because they love the darkness. The world hates the disciples because they are a constant reminder to them that they are out of step with God.

You can't make friends with the world and be a faithful Christian. They don't go together. You can't live to please God and follow His Word and expect the world to love you. And many will conform to the world's acceptance. Don't be shocked when the world hates you.

VS 15-16 -- 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Importantly, Jesus doesn't pray for them to be removed from the world. They have a role in the world. Believers have a role as salt, light, and truth in the world. His prayer is not that they be removed from the world, but they be protected from the evil one. They are to remain in the world, but not to be "of" the world.

Jesus doesn't save us and whisk us away from the big bad world. He doesn't take us out of the world, but He takes us out of the muck and ways of the world. He saves us from out of the world and calls us to sanctification and holiness. But our mission is to be a blessing to the world. We have citizenship in Heaven. We're new creatures in Christ.

If the Lord didn't have purpose for us in the world, He would have saved us and immediately pulled us from the world. The church has a purpose in a broken world and you have a role in that church.

How are we preserved from the world?

VS 17 -- Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Through sanctification in the Word, we are preserved from the world. We are made new through the Word. Sanctification is progressive, meaning, it is gradual, not instantaneous. Your justification is instantaneous. It is immediate. But sanctification takes time. It is what one pastor called a long obedience in the same direction.

This Word sanctifies. This is why we need to read and know the Scriptures. We want to sing it, hear it preached, and grow in our application of it to our lives. This is how our lives change.

VS 18-19 -- 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Jesus sends us into the world with the gospel. We are to live as new creatures in Christ, being sanctified day-by-day, as a living demonstration of the coming New Heavens and New Earth. We model for the world what kind of world is coming. Just as Jesus did when He was sent into the world. He didn't just talk, He modeled.

This modeling doesn't happen just in church services. It's not just when we do Bible studies with friends. This living it out begins with what kind of homes we have (marriage and parenting). It's lived out in how we approach education. It's lived out in how we think about careers, using money, starting businesses, and much more. I have a pastor friend in the state of Washington. There are businessmen and entrepreneurs in their church that have started businesses that exist to give the majority of profits to the church. These are people with other businesses too. But they are always thinking about how they can generate income and resources for the expanding of the kingdom. We're not taken out of the world. No, we remain in the world. And we want to glorify God in the world with our gifts, skills, abilities, and have a passion for the Kingdom.

Jesus says that He consecrates himself. This consecration is speaking of His sacrificial death. He is set apart, Lamb without blemish. He dies for sinners by absorbing the wrath of the Father upon Himself for sinners. He takes sin on Himself and it is buried with Him. When He is raised from the dead, the sin, our sins, remain buried. He consecrated Himself, that they (His disciples then, and now) may be sanctified in truth.

He purifies us.

He makes us holy.

He makes us fit for His kingdom.

We are sanctified and made fit for the truth, not just with our ears, but with our hearts. We are loved by God, and we experience that love through the finished work of Christ.

I want you to look again at verse 19. If you are in Christ today, then you can replace the word "their" with your name. This is no sentimental exercise. This is the reality of what Jesus' atonement achieved. You can make the "they" a "he" or "she." For your sake. For my sake. For our sake.

This is what King Jesus came into the world to accomplish. Today, we marvel at the King of Glory who consecrated Himself for us, and in doing so, sanctified us in the truth.

REVIEW:

- ❖ How did Jesus manifest the name of the Father during his earthly ministry? (John 1:18, 12:44-45, 8-9)
- ❖ What does it mean that "they have kept your word"? (1 John 2:3-6, Galatians 5:22-23, Acts 1:8, John 14:15-17, Psalm 51:10, Ezekiel 36:26, 1 Samuel 16:7)

- ❖ Why is Jesus not praying for the entire world but for those the Father has given him? (John 17:11 & 14, 10:3)
- ❖ How did Jesus guard those who were given to him? Why didn't this extend to Judas? (John 6:70, 6:64-65, 13:11 & 18, 18:8-9, Psalm 41:9, John 13:18)
- ❖ Why doesn't Jesus immediately take his followers out of the world after they come to faith in him? (John 17:18, Matthew 28:18-20, 10:27, John 15:11, 17:13, 1 John 1:4).

REFLECT:

- ❖ What does it mean to be sanctified in truth? (1 Peter 2:9, John 15:3 & 7, 14:6, 17:19, 15:3)
- ❖ How did Jesus model what this looks like? (John 13:34, Philippians 2:5–8, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 4:1–2, John 6:38; 14:31)
- ❖ How does this teaching reassure you today?

RESPOND:

- ❖ How can you model truth for the world where God has you right now?

MEDITATE:

- ❖ John 17:19 - *And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

MEMORIZE:

- ❖ John 17:17 - Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

PRAYER FOCUS:

- ❖ Pastor - **Tim Lance** - Administrative Pastor
- ❖ Ministries - Jail Ministry
- ❖ NAMB Church Planter - **Ryan Sidhom** - Vancouver, WA - River City Church
- ❖ Unreached People Group (UPG): **Arghun in Pakistan**
- ❖ Population: 2400
- ❖ Christian: 0.0%
- ❖ Evangelical: 0.0%
- ❖ Primary Religion: Islam
- ❖ Primary Language: Baiti