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# “Open Church – Open Bible

Min. Marossa Davis

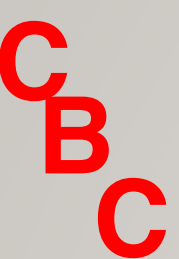


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# Sunday Church School

JANUARY 23, 2022

“ Jesus’ Prayer for His Disciples ”  
John 17: 6-19



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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

John 17:6-19 ( KJV )

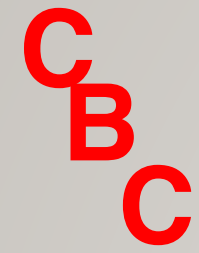
**v. 6 “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.**

v. 7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

**v. 8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.**

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

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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

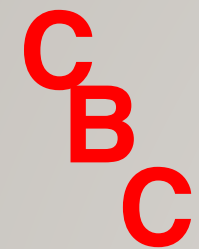
John 17:6-19 ( KJV )

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

v. 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.

**v. 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.**

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



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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

John 17:6-19 ( KJV )

**v. 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.**

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

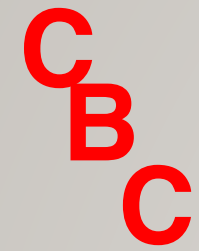
**v. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

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

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

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

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## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

**Isn't it encouraging to know that Jesus prays for us?** The Gospel of John records the longest prayer of Jesus recorded in the Bible, which He prayed the night before He was crucified. In this prayer, He thanked the Father for His disciples, and asked Him to strengthen them. He loved these men and sought God's protection for them.

**It is very special to see** that in what was a very tense time in Jesus' life, He was thinking about His followers. He was not spending His final evening in isolation, all by Himself. Instead, He was focused on the needs of His disciples and glorifying His Father. Jesus never lost sight of the fact that His mission was about redeeming people and saving those who love Him.

**One of the greatest and perhaps most overlooked aspects** of the life of Jesus Christ is His prayer life. The Gospel writers regularly record Jesus



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## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

in prayer. Many of His prayers are not recorded in the Bible, but this week’s text is an exception. In His **High Priestly Prayer**, John provides us with at least a summary of what Jesus prayed the night before His crucifixion, and not surprisingly, His disciples were among the first things on His mind.

**As the Son of God approached His own death**, He spent time in prayer. Prayer is our most powerful tool to use when we face the severe trials that come to us in life.

**In the first five verse of John 17**, Jesus prayed for Himself. But in verses 6-19, He turned to the longest section of this final prayer, which concerned the eleven faithful disciples. He concludes by praying for all who would believe in Him throughout history ( vs. 20-26 ).



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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

## TODAY’S AIM

**FACTS:** to study the manner in which Christ prays before His death.

**PRINCIPLE:** to know that we are never alone in this world because the Holy Spirit lives in us and Christ is praying for us to the Father.

**APPLICATION:** to live in full awareness that Christ goes with us when He sends us out.

## LESSON OUTLINE

- |                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| I. PRAYER FOR THE FAITHFUL           | JOHN 17: 6-10  |
| II. PRAYER FOR PROTECTION            | JOHN 17: 11-12 |
| III. PRAYER FOR JOY AND PRESERVATION | JOHN 17: 13-16 |
| IV. PRAYER FOR HOLINESS              | JOHN 17: 17-19 |



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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

## I. PRAYER FOR THE FAITHFUL

JOHN 17: 6-10

**As the chapter opens we learn that** “Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven” and prayed. This was the beginning of Christ’s intercessory prayer on behalf of His apostles and disciples. In praying this prayer, He was already undertaking the office of high priest. He was praying for us today as much as for them back then.

**The time for Jesus’ sacrifice for sins was near**, and so He prayed that the Father would glorify Him so that He could in turn glorify the Father ( v.1 ). He declared that He had thus far accomplished all the work that the Heavenly Father had given Him to do ( v.4 ).

**The foundation of eternal life is to know God** the Father as He is revealed fully in the person of God the Son ( v.3 ). But the whole idea of knowing God through His Son is a foreign concept to many people. Most think they will go to heaven if they are good enough, however they might define that. But “good

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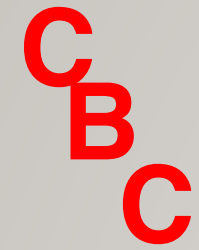
“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

enough” can **never be good enough** to merit heaven! Faith in Jesus alone is the way to the Father ( cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Titus 3:5 ).

**Christ manifested the Father’s name to His disciples** ( John 17:6 ); He revealed the true character and nature of God the Father to them. Since a person’s name represents that person, so it is with the Son representing the Father. To take God’s name in vain ( cf. Ex. 20:7 ) is to disrespect God Himself. We can only be saved through the name of Christ ( cf. Acts 4:12 ); in other words, salvation is found in no one else.

**The people Jesus prayed for here** are those whom the Father had given Him. They came to Him through faith, believing in the words He spoke to them. They had belonged to the Father, and through faith they now belong to the Son. That they belonged to the Father became evident from the fact that they received Christ’s words as the very words of God Himself. They had also

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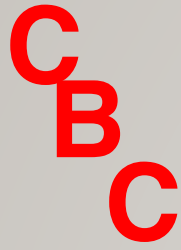


“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

remained obedient to His words, since they had begun following Him. To claim to know Christ without obeying His teachings is both incongruous and hypocritical ( Heb. 10: 26-31 ).

**Some three years with Jesus had led the disciples to the conclusion** that His words and deeds were from the Father. The Lord Jesus had given the disciples the very words of God, and they had received them. Hearing the word of God is essential in coming to faith ( Rom. 10:17 ), but merely hearing is not enough to save anyone. We must both believe the Gospel and prove our faith by putting what we hear into practice. As James reminds us, the implanted word is able to save our souls, **but if we hear it without responding, we deceive ourselves** ( 1:21, 22 ). Rather, we are to be doers of the word.

**The disciples believed that Jesus had been sent by the Father**, but this does not mean that the disciples understood everything Christ said. “ They had



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“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

embraced the essential truths. They had come to see Him as the **Messiah** sent from God, and they had put their faith in Him” ( Sproul, John, Reformation Trust ). The same is true for us. Although we do not yet understand all we read in the Bible, we have to be **willing to act** on what we do understand and **seek to grow** in the grace and knowledge of Christ ( II Pet. 3:18 ).

**In verses 9 and 10 Jesus specifies the particular objects** of His high priestly prayer. He is not praying for all people of the world without exception. His prayer is offered exclusively on behalf of those whom the Father has given Him by faith. **None of this should be taken to mean that God has no concern for the world.** Indeed, God loves all of His creation, and His desire is that they come to a saving knowledge of Christ ( I Tim. 2:4 ).

**The world that Jesus was not praying for was** the world that is **opposed** to God and His redemptive plan to save sinners through faith in Jesus Christ.

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**In this regard, we too are not to love the world** ( cf. I John 2:15-17 ), since that would reveal a lack of love for God. Indeed, “ the whole world lieth in wickedness ( cf. 5:19 ).

**Those who belong to Jesus also belong to the Father and vice versa.** That being so, Christ is glorified in them. This is still true today. Our steadfast faith in Christ glorifies both Jesus and the Father. “ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them ” ( Eph. 2:10 ).

## **II. PRAYER FOR PROTECTION**

**JOHN 17: 11,12**

**Although He was physically still in the world,** in a real sense Jesus could declare, “ I am no more in the world.” Soon He would be crucified, arrive in paradise ( Luke 23:43 ), return bodily to the disciples after His

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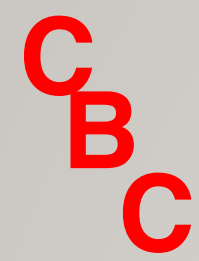
“ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

resurrection ( 24:36-44 ), and eventually ascend back bodily back into heaven ( Acts 1: 9-11 ).

**Since Jesus would be taken from them**, it was appropriate that He pray for the disciples’ welfare in His absence. Today Christ continues to intercede on our behalf in heaven ( Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16). As Jude writes, Jesus “ is able to **keep you** from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (v 24).

**It was important that the disciples remained unified** in their testimony and their mission. They all shared a single Lord and a single mission. What was true of them is still true with us. Later in His prayer, Jesus prayed specifically for those who would come to believe through the testimony of the apostles ( John 17:20 ). He prayed that they also would be unified so that succeeding generations might likewise believe in their testimony about Him.

**Sadly, Christians often do not present a united testimony to the**



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## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

world. Many professed Christians are not true disciples as they reject such basic doctrines as the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible, Jesus’ virgin birth, Christ’s substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection, and other doctrines of the faith. But even among those who hold to these teachings, there are often petty disputes, power struggles and unchristian attitudes . We always do great harm to the testimony of Christ when we cannot get along among ourselves.

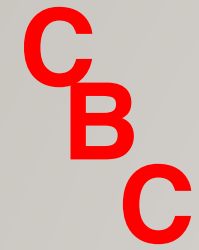
**Mentioned almost as an aside in Jesus’ prayer was “the son of perdition”** ( John 17:12 ), a reference to Judas Iscariot. The word perdition includes concepts such as destruction, damnation and hell itself. The term conveys the truth that Judas was sent by Satan and was doomed to perdition for his betrayal of Christ, as had been prophesied ( cf. Ps. 41:9; 109:8; John 13:18; Acts 1:15-20. Jesus had earlier asked the disciples rhetorically, “ Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” ( John 6:70 ).

### **III. PRAYER FOR JOY AND PRESERVATION**

**JOHN 17: 13-14**

**Knowing that His time on earth was now limited,** Jesus prayed that His

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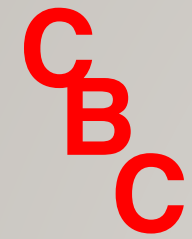


## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

disciples would experience joy because of His words. Joy would become a scarce commodity for them during the next few days before His resurrection. Joy can indeed be experienced in the midst of sorrow and conflict, but the opposite emotions usually overwhelm us instead because we tend to focus on our pain and circumstances.

**When Jesus taught His disciples, He was giving them God’s word.** The Holy Spirit would enable them to remember these things later ( John 14:26 ). Therefore, we can be confident in the full truth of their teachings after Christ ascended to the Father.

**Because Christ had given the apostles His words,** the world hated them because they were “not of the world”. Faithful believers today are likewise not of the world; hence the world hates us as it hated the apostles before us. While persecution takes various forms, “ all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” ( II Tim. 3:12 ). Jesus declared “ Woe



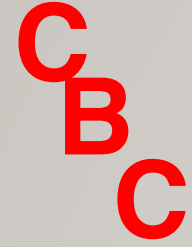
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unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets” ( Luke 6:26 ).

**While we might think that the best way to protect His disciples** would be to shelter them away from the world, that is not what the Lord desires. If we were not in the world, then who would make known the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Who would travel to distant lands with the message of the true God to make disciples. The apostles, followed by multitudes of Christians throughout the centuries, are to carry out the Great Commission ( cf. Matt 28:18-20 ).

**Throughout Church history there have been those who felt** the best way to deal with the world and it’s allurements was to remove themselves from society. To be sure, there may be times when we need to step apart from the world for a brief time, but it is detrimental to the Great Commission to isolate believers from society at large on a long term basis. It is only as we interact and communicate with the people of the world that we can be



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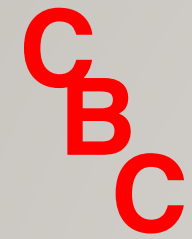
## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

effective witnesses for Jesus. Discernment , common sense, and reasonable caution should be used concerning where and when we should witness, but we must go in Jesus’ name to wherever the Holy Spirit calls us.

**Jesus did pray that the disciples would be kept “ from the evil”** in verse 15. The idea here is that the disciples be protected from the “ evil one”, that is, from Satan who inspires evil. Since Satan is on the prowl, seeking to devour anyone he can ( 1 Pet. 5:8 ), we must be spiritually vigilant. To be victorious, we must actively resist demonic influences and temptations to sin.

**The disciples needed to be protected from the deceptive tactics** of Satan. After all, their writings were to become the foundation of the Church ( cf. Eph. 2:20 ). Jesus was praying that the Holy Spirit would miraculously protect them so that they could complete their legacy of the inspired Scriptures.

The Lord can keep us from falling ( cf. Jude v. 24 ), but that is no



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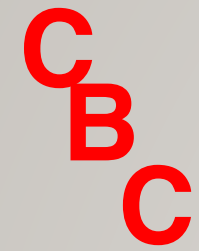
license to walk as close to the edge of the cliff as we can! Thinking we can do as we please and still please the Lord is presumptuous and dangerous ( I Cor. 10:12 )!

## IV. PRAYER FOR HOLINESS

JOHN 17: 17-19

**The word “sanctify” means to be made holy- to be set apart for a holy purpose.** The words “ holy” and “ Saint” derive from the same root word Sanctification is mainly **a progressive process** that begins after conversion and continues throughout our earthly lives. In one important sense, however, it is simultaneous with conversion and continues throughout our earthly lives. In one important sense, however, it is simultaneous with conversion: the sinner is made holy in the eyes of God by the application of the blood of Christ when he or she believes. Then as we look to Christ throughout our Christian lives, we grow in holiness by prayer, Bible study, worship and the habitual practice of Christian virtues by the power of the Holy Spirit ( II Pet. 1:5-8 ).

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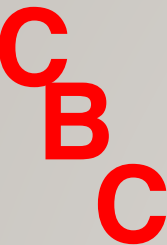
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**While we usually think of God’s Word in its written form in the Bible,** these men had been given God’s Word directly from the mouth of God Himself. Some of them would actually be instrumental in penning the words we have in our New Testament. God’s Word is God’s truth. This is why we can have confidence in the Bible. The Bible not only contains God’s Word; the Bible itself *is* God’s Word ( cf. II Tim. 3:16 ) and is to be proclaimed as such ( cf. 4:2 ).

**A theme running throughout the Gospel of John affirms that Christ was sent by the Father into the world,** and He willingly came to do the Father’s will ( cf. 6:38 ).

**The apostles themselves were about to be sent into a hostile world** to carry on the mission and ministry of Christ. Indeed, the whole Church is the body of Christ to carry on His work ( cf. Rom 12:4-5 ). Had not Jesus’ disciples done this faithfully throughout the centuries since His ascension, we today would never even heard the name of Jesus.

**For the sake of His disciples, Christ sanctified Himself to complete**



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## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ”

His divine mission. He did this so that His apostles would in turn be sanctified to carry on His mission after His ascension back to the Father. We today are heirs of this divine mission, this Great Commission, to point the way to Christ to lost sinners in the name of Him who sent us.

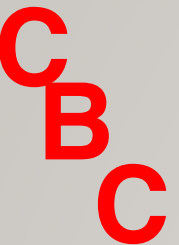
**In conclusion, knowing that Jesus is praying for us should free us to go out and do His will in the world.** As believers, we now represent Jesus to the world in which we live (cf. 1 Cor. 5:20 ) We are not alone though, as the Father has sent the Holy Spirit to live within us ( cf. John 14: 15-17 ) . **Jesus asked His Father to keep the disciples in His name.** There is power in the name of the Lord that cannot be surpassed by any of the world’s forces. If God’s grace is strong enough to **save us**, then it is strong enough to **keep us**.

**We can take comfort in the fact that Jesus is praying for us as we speak.** He is our High Priest who goes to God for us. He never leaves us and is always pleading our case to the Father, seeking our protection and equipping us to go into the world.

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## Practical Points

1. Our relationship with the Son rests in the Father’s giving us to Him ( John 17: 6-8 ).
2. Believers can draw strength from knowing that Jesus prays for them ( vs. 9-10 ).
3. Jesus knew that His disciples would need to be strengthened upon His absence ( vs. 11- 12 ).
4. We can take great comfort in knowing that Jesus commits us to the Father for safekeeping (vs. 13-14).
5. Our goal should be to change the world for the Lord ( vs. 15-16 ).
6. We are called to be drastically different from the world ( vs. 17-19 ).

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## “ Jesus Prays for His Disciples ” Questions For Reflection

1. Why is it essential that Christ’s disciples remain in the world? What is one way that you are willing to make a difference in your community, your world?
2. Jesus prayed for current and future believers. How does this knowledge impact your thoughts today?
3. Has the Father ever kept you from evil in the midst of a trying situation that He did not immediately remove you from ( v.15 )?
4. What does it mean to be sanctified through God’s truth ( v.17)?

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