

Last Sunday, we explored the concept of Jesus praying to Father on His own behalf. In doing this, He gave the glory to God for the work He had completed on earth, this work of training and teaching His disciples to do a great work. This was in the Father's plan, for fishermen and tax collectors to be harvesters, equipped to speak God's truth.

Here in Scripture we see Jesus praying for these disciples that He was sending into the world to a people hungry for hope and freedom from the penalty of sin. Jesus revealed God to these few harvesters, knowing the impact they would have on the world, not in their own power but in the power of the Holy Spirit.

John 17:6-12

⁶ "I have revealed You to those whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours; You gave them to Me and they have obeyed Your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything You have given Me comes from You. ⁸ For I gave them the words You gave Me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from You, and they believed that You sent Me. ⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ All I have is Yours, and all You have is Mine. And glory has come to Me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, protect them by the power of Your Name, the Name you gave Me, so that they may be one as We are one. ¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that Name You gave Me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

Interesting to me is that these men were called by God first. He then gave them to Jesus, who revealed all God wanted them to know about Himself. Jesus calling them tested their faith, a faith they didn't even know they had. Their faith in action of answering the call prepared them to hear God speak through His Son and to accept that Jesus had come from the Father and was among them to reveal God's nature.

Jesus praying for them showed His own faith in them as well. Sure, they would allow pride and doubt to hinder them, but the teachings from the Son would be remembered. In their failing, they would recognize God's protection as sin was revealed, repented and forgiven. Praying in their presence to God as the Father helped them realize a relationship with the Creator was possible. It was more than possible, it was desired and pursued by the Father.

John 17 continues:

¹³ “I am coming to You now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of My joy within them. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁵ My prayer is not that You take them out of the world but that You protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify Myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

As we look at other religions, do any of them desire to bring us joy? Jesus prayed that we might have a full measure of His joy! Earthly joy gives us a taste of how joyful we will be eternally in the presence of God. Often, we view Jesus as a somber soul, but in this prayer we find an attribute worth pursuing. Even though the world may despise and hate us, this godly joy allows us to continue to have eternal thoughts, Kingdom thoughts.

We are sanctified, set apart from the world. Not of this world, we are filled with His truth. Those God has called to Himself are ready to hear it. Are we ready to share it?

The following statement is from Ido Akpan:

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.



The believer is never left alone in the battle. Christ's prayer for His own is the highest and most potent intercession heaven and earth could ever know. The Son speaks before the Father on our behalf, and the Father always hears Him! Every cry for mercy, every plea for strength, every need amid affliction is carried upon the heart of our Great High Priest.

Will Christ allow the enemy of your soul to finally prevail over you? Will He hide His face while you are overwhelmed in the heat of battle? No, never! The Shepherd who purchased you with His blood does not abandon His sheep among wolves. He hears the faintest cry for help and sends grace sufficient for the hour.

Do not doubt His care when the night grows long and the storm becomes fierce. His help often does not come the way you expect, but it never fails to arrive. The interceding Christ is the preserving Christ. Because He lives and prays for you, you shall not be consumed.

We have been brought to the very heart of God by the Son, we cannot fail. Live in this victory!

Your Brother in Christ, Archie

Call to action: Read Hebrews 7:25, Psalm 23:4, Romans 8:31 and Psalm 46:1. What promises to these verses hold? How can you stand on these promises? How does knowing that Jesus Himself intercedes for you change the way you live in your circumstances?