

Sunday 022524

NFIHBC SP
Surviving & Thriving: Jesus Prays to the Father Part II

John 17:13-26

Good morning and welcome, and welcome to all those online as well.

Today's passage is John 17:13-26 (SLIDE Title & passage) READ

If you need a bible raise hand...

While you're getting to the passage...:

2. (SLIDE Sermon Notes)

Pray: (Long Pause – Israel - Children)

Have you ever noticed that what people pray for reveals their hearts?

Listen to these kids prayers:

1. "Dear God, I need you to make my mom not allergic to cats. I really want a cat and I really don't want to ask my mom to move out."

Yes what one prays for reveals their heart.

Today we will finish the five chapter section, 13 -17, often called the Farewell Discourse, our series that we have been calling, Survive & Thrive. Specifically we look at the 2nd half of the High Priestly prayer that Pastor Miles started teaching on last week. We are going to read v13-26. As we read this listen for *indicators* in Jesus' prayer of what his *heart* is. READ John 17:13-26 (1'34")

Let's revisit context again. Jesus and the disciples have been having a long conversation that started in the upper room as they shared the Passover meal together, starting in John 13. This conversation was about Jesus preparing and equipping the disciples for their lives as Jesus' disciples, to *survive and thrive* in this world after he leaves and returns to the Father. In that conversation Jesus tells them of the *many gifts* that he will give them in his absence. Sacrificial love for each other – that's love that costs them something. Jesus told them *how* they can have this sacrificial love for each other, by *abiding- dwelling* with Jesus as the vine, and *allowing* the Gardener to do his work of "*pruning, cleansing and lifting*" the branches so they produce more fruit of sacrificial love. After telling them he was leaving them, Jesus then gave them the "gift of Hope" that he would come back for them so they could be together again, " *dwell together*" forever. He told them about the gift of the Holy Spirit - who would live *inside* them, come *along* side them, and be their Advocate, Encourager, Counselor, Assistant, Strengtheners and Helper. This Holy Spirit would be also be their teacher, their guide to truth, remind them of Jesus' words and teaching, and *prepare them* for the future they are facing as disciples. Jesus also gave them the gift of warning them of what hardships they would face as disciples living in a evil adverse "world" under the rule of Satan. Jesus also made available to them the gift of "*joy that no one can rob them of*". This is joy that *transcends* suffering, hardship, persecution and even threat of death. And Jesus also gave them the "gift of access to God the Father" *using*

Jesus name. That is, “in Jesus name”, meaning with their sin paid for by Jesus, they could be *in the presence of God* and ask for whatever would bring God *glory*.

Last week we saw that Jesus “*revealed*” *the Father* to the disciples by giving glory to God thru his obedience, words, actions, choices. **V17:6 and 17:26 READ (hilite “revealed”)** In other words because Jesus is God, his life, his teachings, his miraculous signs, his actions and interactions, and attitude, and death & rez all “*revealed*” God the Father to the disciples. It all brought God Glory. And it worked! The disciples finally got it! It took 3 years of Jesus actively engaging them, teaching them, loving them, challenging their thinking. We know they got it because just minutes before Jesus’ prayer in John 17, they said. **16:29c READ** “*From this we believe that you came from God.*” PAUSE

In our scripture section today of Jesus’ prayer v13-26, the most significant repeating word is the word “world” – it occurs 13x. The frequency of use and what it means helps us to understand *why and what* Jesus is praying for. **(SLIDE “World defn”)** Reminder the word “world” means the people living in spiritual darkness under the rule of the Satan, “the ruler of the world”, who have not yet surrendered to the will of the Father”. These are real people living under Satan’s power, under his world systems, his economic systems, his political machines, government agendas, his comprehensive education and indoctrination systems, his entertainment system, and his definitions of reality.

Well what does “world” have to do with the disciples and Jesus’ prayer to the Father? Look back at **16:28 READ** Jesus came “*into the world*” to *reveal God* to mankind, and then left the “world”. But where are the disciples? Last week’s passage **17:11 READ** The disciples are “*staying in the world*”. Jesus is *leaving* the world, the disciples are *staying in the world*. And the disciples staying in this world is *by design* so that they can “*testify*” about Jesus.

Look at the *intentionality* of Jesus having his disciples *stay in* and *be in* this world. And it’s not just “*staying in the world*”, Jesus is “*sending them into the world*” **v18 READ**. “To be sent” has the feeling of being trained and equipped and sent on a mission, with clear purpose, and objectives. Not just *survive* the “world”, but *thrive as disciples* in the “world” *where they were sent, testifying about Jesus* in the “world” and making more disciples, who in turn make more disciples.

In a diagram it may look like this. **(SLIDE series John’s World)**

Slides:

1. John’s “world”: Greek is “kosmos”. Occurs 80x in Gospel of John, 13x in 17:13-26
2. Definition of “world”.
3. “Ruler of the world” Satan. John 14:30 Jesus own words.
4. “world circle” – outer ring circles, In Jesus day, Jewish religious leaders & Romans.
5. Jesus Came into this “world” and made disciples. John 1:10,14
6. How did the “world” treat Jesus? Hated him, expelled him, persecuted him, rejected him and killed him.
7. After the resurrection, Jesus returned to the Father

8. Where are the disciples? In the “world”.
9. How should they expect to be treated by the “world”? Hated, expelled,... (use verses)
10. Did Jesus prepare and equip them for this? to live in the “world”? Yes! He equipped them with Sacrificial love, eternal hope, Holy Spirit, Truth, Supernatural Joy “that no one can rob them of” and “lasting peace” despite life’s hardship. This transformed them.
11. Then he sent them “into to the world”, transformed, to testify about him and make more disciples, who make disciples...

This answers “*why*” Jesus was praying for the disciples in the context of v13-26 – he sent his *much loved disciples* into the evil and adverse “world” under the rule of Satan on a mission to “testify” about him and “make disciples”.

Now let’s look at “*What*” Jesus is praying for and what we can learn *about Jesus heart* from his prayer.

V13 starts with such a beautiful relational statement from Jesus to the Father, “*now I’m coming to you*”. This is the 2nd time Jesus said this in his prayer, first time was in the end of **v11c**. “*...I am coming...*” Since Jesus said it twice we will look at it again. I sense a deep longing in that statement of Jesus wanting to be with the Father. I sense the anticipation of Jesus’ mission nearing completion. It reminds me of deployed soldier who tells their loved one that they are *on their way home*. I imagine the relief that Jesus knows he will soon be back with the Father. And with the mission soon completed, all that matters to Jesus is to be with the Father whom he loves and who loves him. I can connect with that, I too long to be with the Father.

And while Jesus was on with the disciples appears that what Jesus taught and communicated to them was so that they would **v13b** “*filled with his joy*”. The NIV says “*have the full measure of my joy*”. So Jesus told the disciples truth, taught the disciples truth, specifically so that as they live in this “world”, they could have *Jesus’ joy*, and a “*full measure of it*”. Now that’s really interesting, because I’m not sure if the world observes that “joy” in Jesus’ disciples too regularly. If you go on Google and ask the question “Why are Christians so.....?” **(SLIDE Google Search)** The predominant words that pop up on my search are: “mean”, “angry”, “cruel”. Try it for yourself sometime and see what comes up. Now I know I just lost 1/3 of you to google.

This google search humbles me a bit,.. quite a lot actually. Honestly my own self-assessment on this makes me wonder if I may be more of contributor to those results than an exception? I acknowledge that I show the world a lot of faces and emotions.. but expressions of genuine joy?... That is probably not as often and natural as Jesus has equipped me, his disciple for. For those of you that are doing well with genuine joy, thank you for modeling that for us.

So if I am not a “joyful” disciple, anybody with me on that, what do I do? Do I Try harder to be joyful? No, you can’t “force joy”, it has to be a “spring that bubbles up from within”. Trying to be “joyful” when it’s not bubbling up from within, is like trying to force yourself to “like” a root canal. So what *do you do* when find yourself not joyful? I’m sooo preaching to myself here. There are two indicators here in v13 and 14 of where *real joy* comes from that helps me to

understand this. Jesus says in **v13b (hilite “my joy”)** “filled with MY joy”. The Joy has to come from Jesus, which means it supernatural. Not fake, not forced, it’s not a fake smile with empty eyes and bitter heart! PAUSE And the 2nd indicator of where this joy comes from is in **v14a (hilite “word”)** Jesus ties *his joy* that he wants *his disciples* to have, to the “word” the Father wanted Jesus to communicate to them. **READ**

In this verse when Jesus references “*your word*” he is using “word” as a synonym to a “message” that the Father wanted Jesus to communicate to them. Well what is the “word” or “message” from the Father that results in Jesus’ disciples having Jesus’ joy? PAUSE It’s the life, words, teaching, actions, death and rez of Jesus. It’s the promise of eternal life and having eternity in the present. It’s being a citizen of heaven and not of this world. It’s victory over sin. Its finally being taught truth. Its perspective of this world thru the lenses of truth. It’s the hope of dwelling with Jesus forever. It’s the power of his spirit living within us who will never leave us. It’s the love of Jesus *transforming us* as we *abide* in him and he in us. And it’s the access to the Father that Jesus gave us thru his own blood. This is a “*joy that no one can rob them of*” and a “joy” that transcends suffering, hardship, persecution and even threat of death.

Now we all have *joyless places* in our lives... of course we do, life is hard.

Look at this beautiful imagery of Jesus wanting to bring *his joy* into *joyless places*. Turn to **Rev 3:20. READ.** So Jesus knocks on the door of one of those “joyless” places, and just like anyone knocking on our door we can “chose” to let him in, or pretend that we are not home. And if we “chose” to let him into one of the joyless places, he will come in, and we will “*share a meal as friends*”. Sharing a meal is a symbol of intimacy, of family. His presence, his words, his truth, his love, his light, his peace all come into that “joyless” place and he supernaturally transforms it, and overtime “joy” happens. *His Joy* happens. Beautiful right?

Where else do we see Jesus “*sharing a meal as friends*” with those he loves in a “joyless place?” **Ps 23:4-5 READ.**

I *imagine* Jesus leading me thru a dark valley of fear, or hurt, or loneliness, or shame, any of those would qualify as a “joyless place”, and he stops in the dark valley, in that really uncomfortable place, and he prepares a table for us to eat. I’m like “Jesus what are you doing? I’m too much of a hot mess to eat, I don’t like where we are, I just want to get out of here! And he slowly and deliberately finishes preparing the table and he sits down and politely motions for me to sit next to him, close like – sort of awkward close. And as we sit together and eat with darkness around us, his calm and soothing voice, his gentle and encouraging words, his non anxious presence, and his light and his love start transforming my joyless place. The fear, the hurt, the loneliness and shame start getting pushed back, and the light starts shining brighter till all that matters is *his presence and his words*. Till *all* that matters is that I am in His presence, that I am *with him* and he is *with me*. “*My beloved is mine and I am his*”. That’s abiding, that’s dwelling together. That is where the joy comes from! PAUSE How long does that take? Moments, days, weeks, months, years? The bible doesn’t tell us how long or how deep the valley of the shadow is, it just tells us it’s a valley and the Shepherd, the “WORD”, will lead us thru it if we let him, and will transform us in it and thru it. LONG PAUSE

Back in John 17, the second half of **v14** is referencing the world's reaction to this transformation. “*And the world hates them because they don't belong to this world*”. How does the first half and 2nd half of v14 fit together? What is implied here is that it is God's message, His Word, Jesus the Word, that the disciples accept, and it *transforms* them, and that transformation separates them, or *sets them apart*, from the world.

Col 1:13 gives a clear image of Jesus disciples being *separate* from the world. READ

In accepting God's message and the transformation that brings, that is how the “world” knows the disciples are no longer one of them – they now belong to Jesus and the “Kingdom of Jesus”. Jesus' disciples *can have* Supernatural Joy when they shouldn't have it, where the world can't. They can have supernatural peace where the world can't. Supernatural sustaining power to endure brutally hard things where the world can't. Supernatural peace about death and dying, and supernatural sacrificial love for each other. Yes they live “*in the world*”, but they are no longer “*of the world*”.

And from Jesus' perspective, this is true of his disciples *on the same* level that he himself is *not* of this world. **v14c**. “*just as I do not belong...*”.

What Jesus prays for next in **vs15** may seem to be counter intuitive. READ As parents, if we have a young child in a dangerous situation we remove them from that as quickly as possible – and teach them about danger signs etc. But that *is not* what Jesus is doing in v15. As the children grow up parents begin to teach them how to handle danger, and they practice that under the supervision and guidance of the parent. Jesus did that already with the disciples in the three years he was with them, but that *is not* what Jesus is doing now in v15. As the now adult children leave the nest, and are on their own, it's game time. A parent cannot protect their adult children effectively once they move out, nor should they. Why? Because the now adult children have to put to practice what they have been taught, they have to figure out how to live in the dangerous world that they live in. What is the role of the parent at that point? They can do what Jesus *is doing* in v15, Pray and commit them to the Father daily. And if the adult child asks for counsel or help (which BTW adult children, is really wise) give it. If they don't ask, otherwise just pray and be available. This is what we see Jesus doing for his much loved disciples in v15. The in person teaching season is over, now it's time to “commit them to the Father in prayer” as they launch.

The end of **v15c** gives us important information about the danger that the launched disciples will face. READ Jesus prays to keep them “*safe from the evil one*”. Jesus references the “*evil one*” who is targeting the disciples with danger. This is the “*ruler of the world*” that Jesus named in **v14:30a**. It's Satan. That's real deal danger, and note it's personal. The “*evil one*” targets the disciples of his enemy Jesus. That's *why* they need protection from the Father. FF Bruce says **(SLIDE FF Bruce quote)** “*they (Jesus disciples) must be preserved from the power of the usurper (Satan) whose occupied domain (the world) they have invaded.*” PAUSE

And the effectiveness of the disciples testifying and making more disciples in the evil world is dependent on the extent to which the disciples allow “Jesus the Word”, and God's “written

words”, and God’s Spirit to transform them into *effective* disciples of Jesus. This is what Jesus prays for in **v17**. READ **(SLIDE Define Make them Holy)** “*Make them holy*” is traditionally translated as “*sanctify them*”. It’s the idea of being “*set apart for God*”.

Here in **v17** Jesus tells us that it is “*God’s truth, God’s word*” “*that sets his disciples apart for God*”. The disciples are not set apart *for the world*, they are set apart *for God*. And that *setting apart* happens thru God’s *truth* transforming their lives. That *sanctification* happens thru discipleship. PAUSE And note here the phrase “*make them holy*” or “*sanctify them*” implies it’s an *ongoing process*, meaning none of us have “*arrived*”. Amen?

v19 READ. This tells us that process of disciples being “*made holy by God’s truth*” can only by first accepting the “*holy sacrifice*” of Jesus’ life in exchange for our own, which is what happens in the next 24 hours of our narrative. Jesus first “*sets himself apart*” as a “*holy sacrifice*” on the cross, so the disciples can “*be set apart*” for the work Jesus wants them to do in this world. Jesus sets himself apart as a holy sacrifice for sin, the disciple accept that holy sacrifice for their sins, then the disciples are set apart for God and his work thru the work of his word, truth, spirit transforming them.

In **v20** we see that Jesus has a secondary audience that he is praying for that far exceeds the 11 that were with him in person. READ. I love this prayer because it means Jesus was praying for me 2000 years ago.

In verse **v21-24 (hi lite “one”4x)** Jesus prays for one more gift he wants the disciples to have in his absence. The beautiful gift of “*oneness*”. READ Note in these verses all the occurrences of the word “*one*”. What is Jesus praying for? *Oneness*.

FF Bruce calls this “*oneness*” the “*unity of love that has its root within the soul but is manifested in outward action*”.

The tendency may be to imagine that what Jesus is asking for is “*oneness among all the disciples of Jesus*” **(SLIDE Disciples oneness)** and that is image is true, it’s just not complete. The “*oneness of the disciples*” happens because of what Jesus reveals to us in these verses and has to do with the word “*in*”. **(v21-23 hilite all occurrences of “in” 5x)**. (READ all “*in*” statements)

Here is how the “*oneness*” happens.

(SLIDE Oneness progression)

Jesus and the Father are *one* v21.

Jesus is *in* the Father and the Father is *in* Jesus v21.

Jesus is *in* the disciples, the Father is *in* Jesus. v23

Therefore the “*oneness*” of Jesus and the Father is in the disciples.

And what the Father has that is *in Jesus* and thus *in* the disciples is the *Father’s Glory* and the *Father’s love*. **v22, 26 (hilite “in” 2x)**. READ

This makes Jesus prayer **v21** “that they will all be one, just as you and I are one” possible. The “*oneness and unity*” Jesus is praying for happens because the *Glory* of the Father and the *Love* of the Father is *in* the disciples thru Jesus *in* the disciples.

So then the image of *oneness and unity* could look like this. Yes the disciples are one, but the oneness they experience happens *only because* the *Love* of the Father and *Glory* of the Father is in them thru Jesus. **(SLIDE Jesus & Father in circle).**

The *first verse* of the 5 chapter “farewell discourse” is about the love of the Father thru Jesus. **13:1** READ

The last verse of this “farewell discourse”, **17:26b** is about the love of the Father thru Jesus. **READ.** “Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them. God the Father wants you to have His love.

So in the context of the disciples living *in the world*, what does the sacrificial love of the Father thru Jesus *in* the disciples *accomplish*? **(SLIDE “What love accomplishes”)**

1. “It will prove to the world that you are my disciples” (Jesus) 13:35
2. “so that the world will believe that you sent me” (Jesus) 17:21
3. “so the world will know that you sent me” (Jesus) 17:23
4. “and the world will know that you love them as much as you love me” (Jesus) 17:23

The sacrificial love of the Father thru Jesus *in* the disciples results in the “*unity of love*” that testifies that **20:31** “Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life by the power of his name.”

So what did Jesus pray for concerning his disciples in v13 -26?

(SLIDE What did Jesus pray for v13-26?)

That *in this world* they would have Jesus’ joy. V13

That in this world they would be *kept safe* from the evil one. V15

That in this world that they would be made “*made holy*” by God’s truth and Word. V17

That in this world they would have the *oneness* of the Jesus and the Father. V21

That in this world they would have the *Glory* of the Father in them thru Jesus in them. V22

And that in this world they would have *the love of the Father* in them thru Jesus in them. V26

And what does Jesus prayer reveal about Jesus heart? Jesus *loves* you! **(SLIDE Jesus loves you)**

And with that love comes choices. Choice to accept his love, choice to invite him and his love into the joyless places, choice to allow Jesus and his love to transform you into love and oneness, choice to surrender and be taught by the Spirit within you, and a choice to go into the world, with all the equipping and preparing and transforming Jesus gave us. **(SLIDE World)**

Amen? Pray

Supplemental Notes:

1. **John 17:6 and 26.** “I have revealed you” Think about what Jesus accomplished in his life and death from a “life purpose” perspective. Jesus came to earth and his “life purpose” was to “reveal God” to the disciples. It worked. It makes me think, “What does my life reveal to the world?”
2. **17:13** “I am coming to you” I must also say here that I’m really impressed and challenged by the example of *clear communication* Jesus gives his disciples in this statement “*now I am coming to you*”. He told the disciples he was *leaving*, and then told the Father he was *coming*. How many of us are that clear and accountable? I think my wife is the best person to answer that for me... ☺
3. **17:15** “evil one”. The reality of this evil and danger for the disciples begs the question, why doesn’t God protect them and remove them from the “world”? Well He can, and sometimes does, but God’s plan is to use these disciples in the “world” to transform the people *of world* by testifying about Jesus and making more disciples. That’s his plan as we see if you jump down to v18. It’s my purpose, it’s your purpose.
4. **17:17** “*Make them Holy – set apart for God*”. At the onset of the Jewish sabbath, it is tradition for the families to light candles to celebrate that they, by observing the Sabbath, are “set apart for God” for the next 24 hours. In that 24 hours they cease their daily work and purpose to only do what feeds their souls in relationship to God; pausing life to rest *with* God and be replenished *by* God. In that 24 hours they are “*set apart for God*”.
5. **17:20** The fact that Jesus is praying for new disciples that come to believe in Jesus thru the message of the original 11 means that Jesus knows the plan He and the Father designed will work. Think that thru. How do we know that? Because “All-knowing” Jesus is already praying for the new disciples.
6. **Rev 3:20** The context of this verse tells us that it is written to believers not unbelievers, its written to *disciples* of Jesus, meaning you and I and all who profess Jesus as Lord.
7. **John 17:21** This verse echoes and builds on what Jesus introduced in John 14:20-21