

Truth That Reaches the Heart

John 17 is not about tidy doctrine; it's about a people who will be so visibly loving that those who observe will find the gospel believable. These verses are pulling us toward a Person and a mission. Here, there is something bigger and better hiding in plain sight — and it's a much higher view of the truth than we may have previously aimed for here. Today, we'll walk through the verse slowly and allow it to say exactly what it says.

I. What "Sanctify" Means

- A. John 17:17: *Sanctify them by the truth ...*
 - 1. "to make holy, to set apart, to consecrate."
- B. *Who is doing it?* Jesus is speaking to the Father. "You...sanctify them."
 - 1. Holiness is something you receive before it is ever something you do.
 - 2. The first move is God's, not ours.
- C. What is the holiness Jesus desires?
 - 1. At its root, holy means "set apart." Marked off from ordinary use.
 - 2. Common men, pulled out of common use, and stamped with God's own holiness.
- D. What sanctification is:
 - 1. God puts His name on us. You belong to Him *before* you ever behave for Him.
 - 2. Getting this backward is **dangerous**.

II. The Truth Does the Work

- A. John 17:17: *Sanctify them by the **truth**...*
 - 1. Truth is the instrument, i.e., the means God reaches for to set a person apart.
 - 2. So, *what kind of truth are we talking about?*
 - a) Truth, in John, isn't a thing you possess. **It's a reality that lays ahold of you.**
- B. Seeing the Difference: A flashlight vs. the dawn.
 - 1. *Truth* carries the idea of something "uncovered," ...
 - 2. It exposes us, then warms you, and sets you free.
- C. The Claim Jesus Makes
 - 1. John 17:17: ***your word** is truth*,... A is B. Truth is the very thing the word is made of.
 - 2. John 1:14: The truth that sanctifies you is *the Word made **flesh***, and it has a face.
 - 3. John 17:19: *I sanctify **myself** for them, so that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*
 - a) Jesus is the truth he's praying we'll be made holy by.
 - b) The instrument of your holiness is the crucified and risen Son.

III. The Heart Truth Reaches

- A. John 14:15: Love first...
 - 1. 14:15: *If you **love** me, you will **keep** my commands.*
 - 2. Love comes first, and obedience is what love does once it's already there.
- B. John 17:21: A People Held Together
 - 1. 17:21: *May they all be **one**, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe you sent me.*
 - 2. The goal is **unity**. For what purpose? *So that the world may **believe**.*

IV. As We Close...

- A. A religion of effort has you *clutching* at holiness:
- B. The life Jesus actually prays for has holiness laying hold of *you*.
- C. Christianity is about being *claimed* by a Person. He sanctified himself for you — gave himself up for you — so that you could be made his.
- D. Come and belong to him, and let your behavior grow out of the belonging.