

Parting Words
Jesus is King
John 17:6-19
Small Group Discussion

Intro Questions (try to get everyone involved in discussion):

- How are you doing this week, in the midst of the coronavirus crisis? What has been the most challenging aspect of this situation so far for you? How have you seen God at work in the midst of the challenges?
- Are there tangible needs that you have, which our group can meet?
- Are you aware of other needs in our community, which we as a group can help to meet?
- In today's passage, we continue to look at the prayer Jesus prayed with his disciples just before his arrest and crucifixion.

Pray: Invite the Holy Spirit to be present and to guide your discussion of God's word.

Read John 17:6-19, then discuss the following.

- What initially stands out to you about this portion of Jesus' prayer?
- For whom is Jesus praying in these verses?
- Based on Jesus' words in v. 8, what quality has set these people apart?
 - To what degree is this quality true of us as well?
- In v. 13, Jesus shares the reason why he is praying aloud with his disciples. What is it? In what way can his prayer have that same result in us?
- In vv. 6-8, Jesus implies that **he is a continuation of what God has started**. What comfort is there in this fact?
 - Why does it matter that we are invited to a work that has been going on for all of time?
 - Can you recall ways or moments that God appealed to you, long before you put your faith in Christ?
- To what degree do you feel, or have you felt, that the world has "hated you" because you are a follower of Jesus?
 - Is there a wrong way that we can cause the world to hate us?
 - Why is it the case, throughout history, that the unbelieving world shuns, hates, and even persecutes believing Christians? (Andrew's explanation on Sunday was the following—but try to let your group flesh it out first: "*Our actions, as we proclaim Jesus is King are a subtle rebuke to the world around us. Their priorities and structures are often set against the kingdom of God.*")
- On Sunday, Andrew said that to some degree, all of us have an impulse in our hearts which says, "It is better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." Do you feel yourself agreeing that you have this impulse, or do you push back? Why?
 - What structures are set against us as we serve and proclaim that Jesus is king?
- What comfort do you find in the fact that **Jesus intercedes for you**, even when you rebel against him?

- In Hebrews, we read, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin” (4:15). How does this assurance comfort you in this present moment—knowing that Jesus is interceding for you?
- In vv. 15, Jesus distinctly says that he is not praying for his followers to be removed from the world, in all of its hostility. The same is true of us—he has left us in this world. Why?
 - What is, then, Jesus’ prayer for us as we remain in the world? Why is this prayer necessary?
 - What does it look like for that prayer to be answered on our behalf today?
- What does it mean for followers of Jesus to be “sanctified by the truth” (v. 17)? You might want to look up the meaning of the word “sanctify.”
 - **Jesus is sanctified (or consecrated) for us.** In v. 19, Jesus talks about sanctifying himself for the sake of his disciples (us included). How is his being sanctified different from ours? How does it enable ours?
- What is the relationship between Jesus’ being “sent into the world” (v. 18) and our being sent into the world? What special meaning might this principle have in our current setting?
- Someone once said, “Anxiety is imagining a future without Jesus.” If you frame your present anxiety in this way, how does your faith help you to find peace?
- What opportunities are there presently to proclaim that Jesus is king, in the way we meet needs in our community?

PRAYER:

- If you haven’t already shared about other particular needs in your life, be sure to do that, and pray for one another.
- Pray that God will show us people in our community who need a special touch from him this week, and that God will show us how to extend his love to them.