

Being Holy

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[0 : 0 0] Father, I ask that you would gently but deeply pour the Holy Spirit upon us at this time, pour the Holy Spirit upon us, deep within us. We ask, Father, that you would pour the Holy Spirit out upon us so that as we hear these words of Jesus, you would bring these words, Father, deep into the very center of who we are, the very center of our mind, our intellect, our imagination, our emotions, our memories, our will, our affections. May you bring your word to bear in the very center of who we are, Father, that we might know the truth and be free in the truth and live to your glory. And all this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.

Please be seated. I'm not quite like a baseball batter who has to move things around the way they like, but anyway, I'm not making any type of political point right now. I really, really, really, really am not.

But this has been a shocking week, hasn't it? With the testimony of the former Attorney General. There was a columnist that I don't always agree with him, but I like to read him. He's an interesting writer. And he said that he hadn't expected much from the testimony of the former Attorney General.

And then he was completely shocked. And the longer the thing went on, the more shocked he got. And that, I think, captured not only myself, but probably 95% of Canadians. I'm not being cynical. This is not a political comment. It would be the exact same thing if the NDP were in power, the Green Party were in power, or the Conservatives were in power. And it's not an overly cynical view. You know, people act towards their self-interest. And they sort of pull ranks around the party and stuff like that. And I think most of us were just expecting a few general comments. Maybe she was a bit pissed off at Justin and a little bit of a dig. But I don't think anybody, maybe her best friend or her dad or something like that, but I don't think anybody was expecting what happened this week. It caught everybody by, I think it caught everybody in Canada by surprise. And I'm sure it caught the poor liberals in front of her completely and utterly by surprise. And just thinking about this is going to help us to handle something in the scripture text today. And I don't know if you picked up on it. Sometimes

John is hard to understand. It's very, very interesting. I should ask a couple of people about if it's still the case. But when I was attempting to learn Greek, the place they teach you, they begin to teach you Greek is John's gospel because the Greek is the simplest. Some of you have heard me say before, it's almost of the level of see, spot, run. Run, spot, run. You know, see Jane. You know, like it's almost of that level. Yet somehow or another, when you read it, and with the language, it's just sort of hard to understand. And I don't know if you grabbed you, but there's a text there which is perennially and very difficult for Christians to understand.

[3 : 1 9] And so if you get your Bibles and turn to John chapter 17, we're going to look at this prayer together. John, and I didn't turn my stopwatch on, which is bad news. No, it's not bad news. There we go.

And so we're going to look at this text together. And just as you're hitting in your Bibles to John chapter 17, verse 6, just to remember, John has written this eyewitness story of Jesus.

Out of all of the eyewitness stories of Jesus, and we have four eyewitness stories of Jesus, John has spent the most time on what has happened the night before Jesus dies.

So roughly from around sundown to whether it's midnight or one or two in the morning, no other eyewitness account has spent as long going through what Jesus actually did that night.

And so where we are right now is that Judas has left. And as Jesus is praying, as he's been speaking, Jesus knows that Judas has gone to find the people, the guards and the soldiers and the police that are going to go to another place where they will be able to capture Jesus. And Jesus knows this is going to happen. He knows that he's going to be the next day falsely accused. He knows he's going to be browbeaten by the authorities. He knows the Romans won't protect him. He knows he will be found guilty.

[4 : 44] He knows that Herod won't protect him. Nobody will protect him. And he knows he's going to die on the cross. And he knows that within less than 24 hours, after he's been mocked on the cross, a spear will be put in his side. And out of the spear, out of the wound, blood and water will flow to show that he really is completely and utterly dead. And Jesus knows all of these things. And he has told the apostles, he has told that the 11 people, that one of them is going to betray him. He's told them that he's leaving. He can't go and they can't come where he's going. He's told them that all of them are going to be scattered from him and that they're not going to hang around. He's told them that Peter will deny him. And then he's comforted them and he's exhorted them and encouraged them. And now we are hearing the second part of Jesus praying over them. So this is what we're hearing. It's very precious. This is Jesus praying over the 11 men who are right in front of him. And if you listen to the whole prayer, if you go back and read all of John 17 in your own time later on, you'll see that

Jesus weaves in and out of three types of themes. He goes in and out of talking about praying about himself, what he's about to do. He's praying over the 11 men specifically in front of him. And at the same time, he's praying over all of us here in Ottawa today. And he's praying over the Christians who met in Nairobi earlier today and in Singapore and in Uganda and in England and in France and Germany in Russia and in Washington. He's praying over us all. That's what we're hearing. So last week we looked at the first part of the prayer. This week we're looking at the middle part of the prayer. Next week we'll look at the rest. And here's how it begins. And it gets right to the problem area for a lot of Christians. So we're going to camp there. Verse 6, John 17 verse 6, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were and you gave them to me. And they have kept your word. Now I said that fairly quickly and you might not have seen the problem. I'm going to read it more slowly and listen as I read it. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were and you gave them to me and they have kept your word.

Here this idea that how is it that, like, this is a very troubling thing to a lot of us if we're honest. How is it that the reason that I am a Christian or that you're a Christian is because the Father gave me to Jesus.

Jesus. The Father gave you to Jesus. And it's very troublesome. We think to ourselves, how can that possibly be? Where on earth could free will be if the Father gives a person to Jesus?

So this is where the Jody, the Attorney General thing comes in. Just to pause for a second. You see, often when we get troubled with texts like this, we think we know what we don't know.

[8 : 09] We think we know what we don't know. And Andrew, could you put up the 1A for me, please? This is a famous quote that Winston Churchill made about Russia. And I don't know if it was true about Russia, but it's really true about human beings. Every human being is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. I've been married to Louise for 37 years. And I knew her for about four years or five years before that. And I bet there's not a week that goes by that she does not say, George, how on earth did you do that? Like, why did you do that? You'd think that after 37 years of knowledge, she'd say, oh, here comes the situation and George is going to do this. But no, it's still a surprise. Why is it that you could go to a party this afternoon and you could meet a person you've never met before and you can talk to them for 10 minutes and you feel after just 10 minutes of conversation, you've got them all figured out. But you haven't figured yourself out and you've been with yourself all your life. Like, why is it that that's true of human beings? Or why is it that you feel that you can figure somebody out after 10 minutes and yet your wife or your best friend or your mom or dad still surprises you? Like, why is that about human beings? Like, one of the cousins that I was closest to growing up, so I knew him all very well. I'm two years older than him.

And I knew him all the way growing up. And all of a sudden, it comes time to go into university. And he chooses to study Greek mythology. And I say to myself, where on earth did that come from?

Like, who on earth? Like, where? It just comes, right? And I'm sure Trudeau was saying, what happened with Jody? Like, where did that come from? You see, the fact of the matter is, when we hear this language of the Father giving us to Jesus, it bothers us. But on one level, why does it bother us? It should bother us if we've actually perfectly figured out how human beings worked. And then we know it's not true. But the fact of the matter is, is that a human being is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma. We're always figuring out new things about people that we know. And we're still figuring out things about ourselves, what drives us. In fact, for those of us after a certain age, I mean, one of the things, here's a thing for you who are 20 or 30 to look forward to when you get older, is that all of a sudden, you start to realize that something about your past actually has been really powerful throughout your entire life.

Or you say something, and you feel, even at my advanced age, that's exactly what my dad used to say to me. You know, it's just, it's amazing. Human beings are complicated. We really are. And so what Jesus is pointing to, if you could put up the next point, Andrew, it's all part of the first point, but it's in sort of three stages, is that without any, without any, without in any way diminishing his real sovereignty over all things, God gives you real freedom.

I mean, in fact, it's a very, very, it's a very common problem in philosophy. It's a very common problem in religious, in religion. If Allah brings all things to be, how is it that human beings have freedom? And ultimately, in Islam, you deny that human beings really have freedom because Allah does all things. In most science, you have, because you believe in cause and effect, at the end of the day, the fact that there's free will is very, very problematic. How can there be free will when there's cause and effect? And what the, only the Bible actually really gives a good account of this.

[12 : 15] Only the Bible. Because there is a free God who is from all eternity, in a sense that the true God that does exist, the Father who's always loved the Son, and the Son has always loved the Father, and the Holy Spirit is, in a sense, the love that goes from the Father to the Son, and the Son to the Father, but the Spirit is himself a person. And out of this, from all eternity, this God who's created all things and sustains all things, and he creates human beings in his image, he creates us to live as a social beings, and he creates us to be in a relationship with himself. And so this God who is completely and utterly free and is sovereign over all things, he gives you and me freedom.

And because he is sovereign over all things, that freedom is maintained. But because he is sovereign over all things, at the end of the day, things that he wants to be done will be done in the midst of complete and utter human freedom. And it is a mystery, but it's wisdom.

It makes a sense of our experience of living in a world of cause and effect, yet also living in a world where we know that there are things that we do that are free. We do things that are free.

There's times we're not. It's not that we have perfect, God-like freedom, but we have real and significant freedom. So, Andrew, if you could put up the next point, because this will help us to understand what's going on here in this word from Jesus. And by the way, my four main points today, they're all in the word of a prayer. They're all in the form of a prayer. And if you don't have time to write them down, I mean, you can take a screenshot. You can go onto the web page later on, tomorrow, or whenever it is that Jenny uploads the points, if these are helpful. But, you know, here's the thing. If we're hearing Jesus pray, I'm a slow learner, but if we're hearing Jesus pray, maybe we should pray the same way. Maybe that's a prayer in keeping with Jesus as well. And so here, the first thing out of this truth, Father, help me to live in the world with a deepening confidence that you gave me to Jesus, and that you are still giving people to Jesus in this city and in every city throughout the world. Father, help me to live in the world with a deepening confidence that you gave me to

Jesus, and that you are still giving people to Jesus in this city and in every city throughout the world. Now, some might say, George, the problem with this text is, isn't that going to make you feel really proud? Actually, the wonderful thing about this text is it completely and utterly removes all human pride. You see, if it was up to me, I could be pretty proud. I might say to myself, I'm like Neo in The Matrix. I'm not like all these other sheep and cattle, blah, blah, all they're interested in is eating. I'm concerned with meaning. I'm concerned with significance. I have a questioning mind. I search. I, I, I. And this text undercuts, knocks your feet out of any sense of pride. And in fact, if you read the rest of the Bible, if you read the Old Testament, if you read 1 Corinthians, God chooses the weak and the foolish of the world to shame the wise. And at the same time that it undercuts any sense of pride, it is a profound encouragement. It is a profound encouragement to when we feel down, to when we feel like we are a failure, to when we feel like we don't understand or we don't know. The fact of the matter is, is that God the Father looked upon you with eyes of love and he gave you to Jesus that you might be made right with the Father.

[16:07] God the Father gave you to Jesus. And he will not take you back and throw you away. And it's a profound encouragement for evangelism.

That's what I've been meditating upon the most this week. See, here's the wonderful thing about evangelism. If it's all up to me, well, I'm hopeless. You know, if I was to go to AA or like an AA for Christian evangelist, I would get up and say, my name is George. I'm hopeless. I'm not very good at it. I mean, like from a human point of view, I'm not very good at it. But you know what? This text is profoundly encouraging. The fact of the matter is, is all I have to do, all my job requirement is, is to just share who Jesus is. But you know what? I know that the Father is giving people to Jesus.

And I can share the gospel with the most unlikely person because I have no idea who God is giving to Jesus. But I know that the Father is giving people to Jesus. And so it's not as if I'm just sharing the gospel and nothing's going to happen. I don't know what's going to happen. And I can share with the most unlikely person because the Father is giving people to Jesus. And it also means that I can pray.

I can pray for the most unlikely people I possibly meet because I know that the Father is giving people to Jesus. Now, I'm going to say something which might sound like it's not a very Canadian thing to say.

And some of you are going to think I need therapy after it. But I'm going to tell you that I'm a second-rate pastor. And I'm a second-rate Christian. And that's not what pastors are supposed to say in public. And it's not what Christians are supposed to say. But the fact of the matter is, is that most of the time, I'm probably at best a second-rate Christian. If you knew what went on in my mind at different times, if you knew other types of things about me, you would say I'm probably a second-rate Christian. And some of you, now that I've opened up the topic of conversation, said, George, you're boasting. I wish I was a second-rate Christian. If you knew what my week was like, I'm a fifth-rate Christian. Second-rate is when I'm on my A-plus game. But what Jesus is about to say is of profound encouragement to us. If you would continue on reading with verse 7.

[18 : 40] Now they know, that's the people in front of them and us, now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me. And they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you. And they have believed that you sent me.

I am praying for them. Here's that, right? I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you gave me. For they are yours. And by the way, it doesn't mean here that Jesus has nothing to do with people who aren't Christians. All he's saying is, I'm not going to reveal to you what goes on between me and the Father in that case. I just want you to know what goes on between me and the Father for you. It's all he's saying. We're getting to listen in to how he prays for us. I'll say that again, verse 9. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me. Notice that again. For they are yours. Now here's the thing. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. I am glorified in them.

Now, Jesus is speaking to 11 men who spent three years with him, have been constantly clueless, have had just a couple of days earlier, if you read one of the other gospel accounts, they've gotten into a big argument about who's going to sit on the right of Jesus's throne and who's going to sit on the left. And they've gotten into a big fight about it. He's told them repeatedly that he's going to die on the cross, and none of them believe it. He's told them repeatedly that he's going to rise from the dead, and none of them believe it. And they're all going to be scattered, and Peter's going to deny them. And they're all going to live frightened, terrified, hidden lives after Good Friday. And none of them expect Easter Sunday. And Jesus says to these second-rate men, I am glorified in you.

This is not pop psychology. A little while ago, one of my children has obviously, actually probably all of them have inherited my twisted way of looking at things or skeptical way of looking at things.

They'd been at a... She goes to a very, very, very, very good church. They were doing an infant dedication. That's for churches that don't practice infant baptism, but, you know, you dedicate the child or the baby to Jesus. But the big sign throughout the dedication service is you are the perfect parent for that child. It's a room of four or five hundred people. And my daughter said, Dad, that's wrong. Do you trouble with that? And I said, yeah, the first thing that goes through my mind is in a room of four or five hundred people, there's a couple of child abusers. And you've just told the child abuser that you're the perfect parent for your child. That's pop psychology. It's romanticism. It's not the Bible.

[22 : 00] And my daughter was very encouraged that I also was troubled with it. And it's just a momentary lapse. It's a good church. They just made a mistake. But listen to this again. I confess before you that I am a second-rate pastor. And most of the time, if not all of the time, I go from second-rate to third-rate or whatever as a disciple. But here is how Jesus prays about you and me.

To the Father. He prays about you and me that he is glorified in us. That is not pop psychology. That is listening to Jesus talk about you.

Today. I find it very moving. Now, some of you might be wondering, George, this is actually, there's things in this prayer that it never dawned on me. But is it just all, you know, some people say, some Christians say, and that the real highest prayer, the deepest prayer is where you never ask anything of God.

All you do is have this experience of God. And that's well-meaning Christian advice, but that's not true. The Bible never says that the highest prayer doesn't ask for anything. We're now going to see in this prayer, before it's over, Jesus is going to make four asks of the Father. Four asks. And we're going to look at two of them this week and two of them next week. And we're about to look at the first ask. It's taken in sort of two bits with a bit of commentary. And it begins in verse 11. The first ask that Jesus makes for us to the Father. And it begins verse 11.

And I am no longer in the world. And just sort of pause. I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. This is a common thing in the Bible where Jesus, obviously, he knows he's in front of them.

[24 : 11] So what this is, is that sometimes the Bible talks about the future as being so certain that the right way to talk about it is the past tense. And that's what's happening here. He knows they're going to be blown out of their mind in an hour or so when he's captured. They're going to be shocked beyond belief when people beat him and whip him. And they're going to be shocked beyond belief that he's nailed to the cross. They're going to be shocked beyond belief that he dies. But he is already talking about his resurrection as being so certain that he can use the past tense. So read that again. Verse 11.

It's not the ask. It comes right after this. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world. And I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me. I'll explain this in a moment. Keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them.

And not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction or the son of perdition. Depends on your Bible passages that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am going to you. And these things I speak in the world that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

I have given them your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. And you'll see in your notes there, maybe some of your Bibles in the original language, it can be, the original language can have two meanings.

And in English, you have to translate one or the other. But John, Jesus is obviously intending to use both senses at the same time. It can either mean keep them from demons or keep them from evil. And it means both equally. It can be translated either way. And you can only take one sense in English. Now, here's the thing. If you look back at this, the first ask, the first ask is saying, keep them. I have to find that again. Keep them in your name. And the word here, keep, means some of your Bible versions have different words. It can mean keep, keep safe, protect, guard, keep original or preserve. And all of these are senses about what Jesus is saying.

[26 : 44] And in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, when it uses the phrase name for God, it's a little bit like if I wanted to talk about capitalism, I might say Wall Street. And if I talk about Wall Street, I'm talking about banks, investment firms, money lending, capitalism.

In Canada, I might say Bay Street. If I want to talk about the entertainment industry, I might say Hollywood. I want to talk about country music. I talk about Nashville. Right? And so when it says here in your name, it's a short form that encompasses, it's a short way of talking about in who you really are. The name of God refers to who God really is. It refers to what God really has done, is doing, and will do. It refers to why he does what he does, and will do what he will do, and is doing, why he does all those things. It includes being clear about what's not going on in God's mind or heart, not in his plans. It's his plans, his character, his personality, his nature. It's him.

And that's all kept in this word name. And so Jesus is praying for us that we would be protected, kept, guarded, kept safe in the knowledge of the true God, and who he is, and what he's doing, and what his plans are for us, and what his plans are for you, and the fact that he gave you to Jesus, and he's redeemed you. And Jesus is praying that we would be kept in this, and be kept in this knowledge in such a way that human, that we Christians are kept as one. That just as the Father and the Son are one, that we also are kept in sort of a unity of purpose, and unity of will, and unity of plans, and affections for each other. And he's praying that that would be true of us. And he's also praying that we would be protected from evil. Not only the evil that can befall us, but the evil that we do, the evil that can start to infiltrate how we think, and how we feel, and how we remember.

And he's also praying that we would be protected from demons. Now, just to be clear, if you think about what's just been said by Jesus earlier, if I am a Christian because the Father took me, you know, there's this beautiful Anne, I don't know how to pronounce her last name, G-E-D-D-E-S.

I used to have it in my office. She found a man with exceptionally large hands that were very, very hairy, and she found a little tiny, very, very, like, I think the baby was born prematurely, about three pounds. And there's this wonderful picture of these huge, hairy hands, and this tiny, tiny little baby in the hands. And if you want to help to think about what it means for the Father giving you to Jesus, that's how you think about it. In those hands, he gives you to Jesus.

[29 : 42] And if the Father has so given you to Jesus, no demon, after you have come to Jesus, can ever enter you and possess you. It can't happen. How could a demon get through those hands?

But demons can harass us. They can tempt us. They can oppress us. And Jesus is praying over you and me that we would be kept from such demonic powers and influences.

But more and more and more, what would characterize us is that you and I are in knowledge and fellowship in a growing, humble way of God.

Now, Andrew, if you could just put up, it's not a sermon point, but it's four simple things. I know many people when they, oh, you found that, boy, you are good. Here I thought people were nodding because they remembered the picture. That's what happens when the screen's behind me. If you could put up, if you could put up the four words, five words, actually.

Did you find that? Yeah. Many people, when they come to the church, they're really troubled by this. But if you want to think about it, these words, one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church, that's what Jesus is talking about here in John 17.

[31 : 08] He's praying that we would be one. And he's not talking about one in an institutional way. He's talking about the invisible church. He's not talking about institutions, invisible churches that you can see.

He's talking about the church that is, and it's one church, that to be a real Christian means that you belong to Jesus, and you are in Jesus. And that's something that the world might not be able to see, that a church membership can't necessarily see, but it means you're in Jesus.

And so we are to understand that because there's only one Savior, there's only one God, there's only one conversion, that when we enter Jesus, that there's just to be one church.

And we're to pray that the church, the bonds of affection are between Christians. And we are to try to fight against the suspicion we have against Christians who worship in different ways. And at the same time, we are to be holy.

It means that we are to be understood, that we are to understand that we are set apart for God. We are set apart for his purposes, his plans, and his purpose and plans are that we will be free, that we will be delivered, that we will bring him glory, that we will be a blessing to this city, that we will bring him glory, even in the valley of the shadow of death, and in very, very difficult times.

[32 : 20] And we are to be Catholic. And Catholic means here universal. It has two important meanings. It means that it is Catholic over time and Catholic over geography.

It means that there is one church that extends back in time. Peter and John are in that one church, just like you and me. And that's what I mean by historic.

And it's all over the world. Uganda and Singapore and China and Rwanda are all also part of, there's ultimately only this one church that goes all around the world. And Catholic also has another important sense which people forget, which means varied.

It used to be that people would talk about somebody having a Catholic taste in literature. And if they said that, it didn't mean that they liked reading Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh, Catholic writers, for those of you who know writers.

What it means is that they could read Graham Greene, and then they could read Tom Clancy, and then they could read Jane Austen, and then they could read a Greek myth, and then they could read some post-punk, post-gay novel, and it means widely varied.

[33 : 34] And so this is really important. Remember, because... You see, it's so easy for us to slip into thinking of the father and the son.

I don't know how many of you have seen the movie Venom. I'm not recommending you see it. But Venom, if you've seen the movie, it's a lot like a lot of science fiction movies nowadays where there's this idea that there's this sort of host, and you wear different bodies.

And this isn't a spoiler alert, but if you end up seeing the movie Venom, there's this spaceship that crashes, and there's these extraterrestrial life forms, and they enter a person.

And whenever they enter a person, it doesn't matter if it's a little tiny Chinese lady, it doesn't matter if it's a young girl, it doesn't matter if it's a huge, big, hulking guy. The host completely and utterly takes over the person.

They all have the same personality. It's really just one person with different sleeves. And that's what's going on. But you see, what we see in Jesus and the father and the way they're talking, I could have talked about this, but I haven't talked about it very much.

[34 : 36] What we're seeing here is we're seeing the mystery and the dynamics of the Trinity, how Jesus is God, the son of God made flesh, and the father is the father. And they have real conversation, and they're different.

And what we see about God is God is not like a single pure note that goes out for all eternity, but God is more like a symphony with lots of different instruments, all playing the same tune, going in the same direction, at the same rhythm.

And God is like that. God is the father, is not the son, and the son is not the father. They're both God. There's only one God, but the father and the son are different. They love each other. They give worth to each other.

And it goes on for all eternity, and they're different. And so it is that it is part of Jesus' plan that this morning there were churches where people, when it came to sing, were dancing and jumping up and down and doing this.

And there were other churches that they would think that they had gone psychologically crazy if they did something like that, because real worship is sitting quiet. And those of us who like to sit quiet, yet you can't look down your nose at those who like to jump up and down and dance and wave their arms.

[35 : 47] And those who like to jump up and down and dance and wave their arms can't look down at those who like to sit quiet. Why? Because God delights in his people being one but being different.

And apostolic, which is in the creed, is just the old way that they referred to the fact that everything in the Bible ultimately comes from Jesus by the witness of the apostles and that we are to be rooted in the Bible.

That's what apostolic means in this particular case. So this is how Jesus, if you could put up the point, Andrew, I have to wrap this up. Here's the point.

It's a prayer. Holy Father, keep me safe in your name so that I will seek to be one with other Christians as you are one with Jesus and keep me safe from the devil and from all evil.

Holy Father, keep me safe in your name so that I will seek to be one with other Christians as you are one with Jesus and keep me safe from the devil and from all evil.

[36 : 55] One of the perennial problems with Christians is that we don't like how we're different, and one of the ways that we don't like how we're different is that we have different politics.

We're all very, very familiar with a big problem in the States, at least in the media, of evangelical churches being very tied to one political party.

I'm part of the Dig and Delve apologetics team, and one of the suggestions that we had was that we were going to study the Christian response to the environmental thing, and I said to them, we have to be very careful about that, because there really isn't a Christian response to the environmental thing.

Most environmental issues are a code word for talking about economic systems, and I know this is a shock, but the Bible doesn't back one economic system.

We think it does, but we're wrong. It's an idol. It doesn't mean you shouldn't have opinions about it, but it just means you have to be careful. A Christian in good conscience can disagree.

[38 : 02] The U.S. get a lot of press, but let me tell you, when I was part of the Anglican Church of Canada, they had the same problem as evangelicals, only on the other side of the political spectrum. I cannot tell you the number of times where I would spend time with other clergy, and they would go on for an hour promoting the most...

They would complain that whatever the NDP was doing wasn't left-wing enough, and they saw no type of embarrassment between it. It's a type of an idol and a trap that we can fall into, and often what we do is we create silos and ghettos around these things, which Christians should, in truth, be able to disagree about.

And this next thing, which is a bridge between... If we just look at the next few... It's a bridge. It's very important for us to see and understand this. Look what Jesus says in verse 16 and 17.

There we go. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. I got this out of order.

That's what happens when you do your notes. Okay, here's the point. I'm going to read down... Poor Andrew's followed my instructions perfectly to the letter.

[39 : 16] Let's read verse 16 and 17 again. I'm going to jump down to 18. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

And the point here is that Jesus has not created a ghetto. He's not created a ghetto around worship styles. He's not created a ghetto about being afraid of the world.

He's not created a ghetto centered around politics or economic systems. He's given us a commission to go into the world, to be as one as we can and to go into the world.

And here we see Jesus' second ask in verse 17. Verse 17, it says, Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. If you could put up the point, Andrew, because I have to be careful of the time here.

What Jesus is asking here is he's asking the Father to set me aside in the truth and for the truth. And all for the truth. He's asking me to...

[40 : 18] Father, set me aside in the truth and for the truth. Make me holy in the truth and for the truth. May all I do be in the truth and for the truth. And your word is true.

That's what Jesus is praying here. Sanctify means that we're set apart by God for his purposes and his use.

And he doesn't just ask that we're set apart for God, for his purposes and his use. But we're sanctified for God and his purposes, for truth and in truth. And in here, Jesus refers to all the breadth and height and depth and length of truth.

He's referring to historical truth, scientific truth, economic truth, accounting truth, truth about morals, truth about beauty, truth that's personal, truth about religion, truth about spirituality.

It is truth that we are set aside for. That we are to be people of the truth. That we are to be people who seek to know the truth and to understand that at the end of the day, because your word is true, that there is no barrier between these things.

[41 : 32] We don't have to worry about the truth of science undermining the truth of love or of beauty or of meaning. And we don't have to worry about the truth of meaning or beauty, meaning that we can't have truth about who God is.

And we don't have to worry about the truth about who God is getting in the way about having true knowledge of how people work. There's just one truth. And in this one truth, which encompasses science and morals and history and all intellectuals and aesthetic and moral and religious and spiritual and political endeavors, this one realm of truth is completely and utterly consistent with the fact that the Bible is true.

That we can read it without having to worry that we're going to have to choose between this and science or this and history or this and morality or this and beauty.

It's just true. Very, very briefly, look at verse 18 and 19, the end part of this prayer. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

This is Jesus commissioning us. And for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth. And for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth.

[42 : 48] And what Jesus is doing here is he's doing a little bit of a play on words. It's really interesting that even at this very, very, very solemn moment when he's praying, and it's been a very emotional prayer.

But in this particular case, he probably has a bit of a smile on him when he prays because he's playing with language. You see, all the way through this prayer, when he's talking about us and he uses the word sanctify, sanctify, it's a sense of all of the Old Testament passages where a prophet or a priest is set apart for God to proclaim God's word or do what God has called them to do in leadership and in worship.

But when he uses the word sanctify for himself, which is the same word in Greek, he uses it in a different sense. He's playing on words. And here, it's the word that's used in the Old Testament when an animal is being set aside to be the sacrifice that makes humans right.

So if you could put up the last point, Andrew. Father, help me to live in the world with a deepening confidence that God, the Son of God, dedicated himself to your will and died on the cross on my behalf that I might be wholly, truly yours.

Father, help me to live in the world with a deepening confidence that God, the Son of God, dedicated himself to do your will and die on the cross on my behalf that I might be wholly, truly yours.

[44 : 34] Let's stand. Father, we continue to ask that you would pour out the Holy Spirit upon us.

Father, you know those of us who are specially harassed by the demonic. You know those of us who know that we are, and you know those of us who don't realize who we are, but we are.

And Father, we take such great comfort from the prayer of Jesus, and we echo that prayer over each other, that you would keep us, Father, from those demons that are harassing.

And Father, you know the grip that evil has on each of our hearts. And we ask, Father, as in the words of Jesus, I ask, Father, for myself and for all who are here, that you would keep us from evil, from all evil.

And Father, you know how easy it is for me to forget, to get worried about how second-rate I am and forget that you, Father, have given me to Jesus.

[45 : 46] I ask, Father, that you would grant by your Holy Spirit a deepening, humbling confidence, Father, that you gave me to Jesus, that you gave each one here who is in Jesus to Jesus.

And Father, if there is any here this morning who has not yet given themselves to Jesus, and they can feel the pressure of your word to surrender, Father, we ask that your Holy Spirit would move in their lives, and they would lay down their arms and stop running from you, and they would just say, Father, thank you that you have given me to Jesus.

Jesus, you are my Savior. I am yours. Thank you for what you have done for me out of your love for me. And Father, we ask that you would bring all of these prayers of Jesus, all of this prayer deep into our hearts.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus and all of God's people said, Amen.