

# John 17:6-19

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[0:00] Today's sermon text is John chapter 17, verses 6 through 19. To give eternal life to all whom you have given.

For this is eternal life, that I know you, the only true God, in Jesus Christ, whom you accept. I glorify you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.

Yours they were, and you gave me. And they have kept your word. Now, they know that everything that you have given me is from me. 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 am from you. And they have believed, and they accept it. I am praying for them.

[1:32] I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me. For they are willed. All mine are willed, and yours are mine. And I am glorified in them.

And I am no longer in the world, but they are glorified. And I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are.

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, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

But now, I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have 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 world. They are not of the world, just as I am of the world.

[2:45] Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is true. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake, I consecrate myself.

That they also may be sanctified in the truth. This is the word of the Lord. Praise to you, God. Covenant Father, come before you again.

You are a needy people, Lord. Now that is evident every second of our lives. God, as our hearts are only kept beating by your power.

Our lungs kept breathing by your power. That is evident, not just physically, but spiritually, Lord. As we are so prone to wander from the truth. But your desire today is to sanctify us in the truth of your word.

So God, I pray that you would do that. That you would transform us. That you would make us more into the likeness of Christ. As we consider these profound words.

[3:52] That Jesus prayed for his disciples 2,000 years ago. That are relevant for every age. Until you come back. So we ask that your spirit would guide us into this truth now.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, good morning church. Good morning. My name is Mike. One of the elders here at Shoreline. And so glad that you have joined us.

To worship the Lord today. I want to ask a question this morning. And that is, why does this church exist? Why does Shoreline exist? And why does the church, why does capital C church, why does the church of Jesus Christ exist?

Like what is the mission and the purpose of the church? And the mission and purpose of our church, of Shoreline. Why are we here? Well, if you were to go on Shoreline's website, you could

read what our mission statement is.

And if you're new here, we don't actually read this every single week. In fact, perhaps we would be better to look at it more often. But the website is this. Our mission statement is this. Shoreline exists to magnify God's glory through the advancement of the gospel for the joy of all people.

[5:01] We are a community of Christians who have been redeemed by God and brought into joyful relationship with Him through the gracious work of Jesus Christ. We want all people to come to know and love this God for their eternal good and His everlasting glory.

Christ has left us here on earth as His ambassadors to reveal His heart and character to the world. Our unceasing desire and prayer is, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That's a mission statement that's on the website of our church. Now, where does a statement like this get drawn from? Well, I quoted there, the statement quotes the second and third petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

But not just from the Lord's Prayer, but also from passages like the one before us today. In John 17, this is, like I said last week, this is Jesus is zooming way out.

He's giving us a cosmic picture. His conversation is cosmic in scale. As Brad just said, the Son of God on earth, the incarnate Son, is praying to God the Father in heaven.

[6:06] This is a cosmic conversation. And He's praying for His disciples here. And it is good this morning. It's good. It's good for us often to remind ourselves what we're about, right?

What we're supposed to be about as the church. So, last week, I had I and Ryan read for us the first five verses of Jesus' prayer, which we looked at last week. As we gazed at the beauty and the glory of Christ, right?

And the beauty and the glory of the Father displayed through Jesus' death on the cross and the resulting exaltation. So, the first five verses of the prayer, Jesus prays for the glory of the Father and the Son.

And then right in the middle, we saw that Jesus defined in these simple yet profound terms what eternal life is, right? Eternal life is that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Jesus brought glory to the Father, He prayed, by accomplishing the work that the Father had given Him, right? To give eternal life to His disciples, whom the Father had given to Him.

[7:12] To bring the disciples into intimate fellowship with God, which we've been talking about all throughout the prayer world discourse. And so now, in the next portion of Jesus' prayer, He expounds on that work.

The work that He's accomplished, He expounds on it. And He transitions to actually praying for the eleven disciples. And so, here's where we're headed in today's sermon.

In verses 6 through the first part of 11, we see the premise of Jesus' prayer. The premise of Jesus' prayer. In verses 12 through 19, we see the petitions of Jesus' prayer.

And the main point in all of it is this. That God preserves and sanctifies His church for His mission and His eternal glory.

In other words, God makes His church holy. He preserves and sanctifies. He makes His church holy like Him for His mission, for the purpose of mission, which is that sinners would be drawn to Him and be saved.

[8:12] And ultimately, for the sake of the eternal glory of His name. That's why I titled this sermon, Our Missional Holiness, for His eternal glory. And we're going to unpack that today.

So, the first section of this prayer. The premise of Jesus' prayer. Belonging to Father and Son. Belonging to Father and Son. Now, Jesus says in verse 9, right in the middle of this section, He says, I am praying for them.

And He describes in the verses before and the verses after who them actually is. Who is Jesus praying for? And He's describing in these verses what makes a disciple of Jesus a disciple of Jesus.

And we see three things here. We see first, God's revelation. So, in verse 6, He said, I have manifested your name, the Father's name, to the people whom you gave Me out of the world.

And verse 8, He says, For I have given them the words that you gave Me. See, it always starts. Faith, salvation, discipleship.

[9:16] It always starts with God revealing Himself to mankind. Now, this is, I mean, if you look back through the beginning of time, the beginning of Scripture, this is how it's always been.

God speaks. God speaks forth. And He reveals Himself. He has revealed Himself in creation. When God spoke and it came to be. And He has revealed Himself by calling, you know, calling Abram to Himself.

Calling Israel to Himself. It always begins with the revelation of God. If we don't have revelation from God, then we've got nothing. We've got nothing. And this is how Jesus accomplished the Father's work.

He revealed the Father. And He made this all throughout Jesus' ministry. We've seen this in John. Jesus was sent to accomplish the Father's work to make the Father known. If you've seen Me, He told Philip, if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father.

God's revelation. And the second thing that we see is God's election. Jesus says, I manifest your name to the people whom you gave Me, who suffered from the Father, whom you gave Me out of the world.

[10:17] Yours they were, and you gave them to Me. And He says a similar thing in verse 9. Those whom you have given Me. You see this phrase throughout the High Priest in prayer here.

The disciples were chosen by the Father and given to Jesus. And earlier, Jesus also said that He Himself had appointed them. He appointed them. He chose them.

And this is how one becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ. We need the revelation of God. God revealing Himself, speaking to us. And God also has to choose us.

And we find throughout the New Testament that God chooses us before even the foundation of the world. Jesus had said back in John 15, So it's God's revelation.

It's God's election. Because friends, we realize we're in sin apart from Christ. We're dead in sin. We don't have an ability even to choose Christ.

[11:22] We don't even have that ability. We need the election, the sovereign will of God and His grace to reveal Himself to us and to choose us. But we also do see, mixed in here, is man's response.

So God's revelation, God's election, man's response. And in Jesus' prayer, and we've seen this throughout John, the divine sovereignty of God and His choosing, and man's response are both held up as true.

How exactly do they fit together? It's a divine mystery. But we know that Jesus says, They have kept your word. The 11 disciples here, remember Judas has left.

The 11 disciples that are remaining, they have kept your word. They know that everything that you have given me is from you. They have received them, the words that you gave them. So they have received the Father's words, given to the Son, given to them, and they have come to know, in truth, that I came from you.

They have believed that you sent me. So we see here, there's a reception on the disciples' part to the word of God. They've received it, they've internalized it, they've believed it, they've made it their own.

[12:30] It's their response, right? So as a result of God's revelation, God's election, their response of faith, these 11 belong to Father and Son.

They belong to them. And Jesus says that, I am glorified, verse 10, I am glorified in them. And this is the basis of Jesus' prayer. This is the premise of his prayer.

This is why he's praying for them. He's interceding now before the Father, right? As the high priest interceding on behalf of these 11, before God the Father, because they are his.

They are his. Verse 9 says, For they are yours, and all mine are yours, and yours are mine. And glorified in them. Now, I want to stop for a second and say, we might object to this very gracious description of the disciples that Jesus gives in this prayer.

in light of the fact that they have repeatedly shown over and over again, it's a lack of understanding, right? They just, they've repeatedly shown that they don't quite get it. And they've repeatedly shown

also to lack faith.

[13:38] I mean, Jesus, Jesus literally just told them at the end of chapter 16, where is it? It's in, it's in, verse 32. Behold, the hour is coming, and Tita has come, when you will be scattered each to his own home and will leave me alone.

Like, the disciples are not going to be able to bear up against the weight that's about to come when Christ is falsely accused and arrested in honor of that. So I want to say, ask this, is, is Jesus over-speaking here about the 11 disciples?

Is he over-speaking? Is Jesus saying something that's not really true? It's important for us to understand this here. The, the disciples' faith is weak.

Their understanding is incomplete. But, they have proven by their loyalty to Jesus, their deep conviction that he truly is both Savior and Lord.

They, they've shown that, like, even when they cannot understand the words of Jesus, they still know that what he says is true. Like, I don't get it. But I know that you're Christ.

[14:43] I know that you're the Messiah. I know that you are sent from the Father. I know that what you say is true. And I just need some help understanding these words.

See, their faith is weak, but they still have faith. They still have faith. You know, it's kind of like, we have a lot of children in this church, right? And we've had a lot of newborns lately and kind of always, praise God.

Praise God. And, I don't know, babies are really cute. They absolutely are. But they also kind of look sort of alien when they're born, right? Like, they have years to develop, they have years to mature.

But when an infant is born, even though they might look a little strange, they still bear the family resemblance, right? There's still a family resemblance. Like, you can look at a child and say, ah, I see your nose and I see, you know, his eyes.

And that's also true of our discipleship in Christ. Like, when we become a disciple of Jesus Christ, there is instantly, there's instantly a family resemblance that we bear to God the Father.

[15:48] And it's going to take us our entire lives to grow into spiritual maturity, to increasingly look like God. But, nonetheless, even though our faith remains weak, there's still faith.

And that means that we're part of the family of God. We belong to the Father. We are His. So, I hope that's an encouragement for you all today. Because I don't know about you, but I struggle daily with all kinds of sins.

And I struggle sometimes to take to heart the things that the Lord has said. But I'm encouraged when I see that, okay, but there's this way and this way and this way that God is working in me and He's making me look like Him.

So, if you're here and you're wrestling with doubts or you're struggling with different sin, just know that the immature faith is still faith and it ultimately doesn't rest on us whether we are in God.

Right? Nobody can snatch us out of Christ's hand and Jesus said that and nobody can snatch him out of my Father's hand who's even greater than me. Let there be an encouragement to you all this morning.

[16:54] And briefly, there is also a test here for us because the disciples, though they didn't understand God's words, they still received them, they believed them and they asked for more help in understanding them and we know the Spirit was going to come and give them that insight.

So, I just want to ask, do you humbly receive Jesus' words even when you don't understand them? Even when you don't understand them? Like, there's some hard words in Scripture, there's some confusing words in Scripture.

Do you receive them and pray through them and seek counsel if you need it from a brother or a sister to come to a fuller understanding? So now, because Jesus is leaving, right, he says that I am no longer in the world, he's about to leave the world, but they are in the world and I'm coming to you, Jesus turns now to petition the Father on their behalf.

The petitions of Jesus' prayer. Preservation and sanctification. preservation. And the first one that we see, preservation that's kept in the Father's name.

Jesus prays, Holy Father, keep them in your name which you have given me. Keep them in your name. The Father's name, one's name, represents their very self.

[18:16] And so, the name of God, it represents himself, his character, his nature, his essence. And the Father, and we've seen this throughout the parable discourse, the Father has shared himself completely with the Son, right?

And the Son has shared himself completely with the disciples. And Jesus has brought them into his name, into the name of the Father. Jesus is praying here that his disciples would remain in him, right?

In him. We've been using the language of the vine since John 15, abiding in him, connected to the vine, in this living union with God the Father and God the Son.

That's what Jesus is praying, abiding in him and his word and his love, all of which Jesus has manifested to the disciples, right? And notice, Jesus says, Holy Father, Holy Father, the one who is set apart, the one who is utterly other, distinct, right?

Totally different from the sinful world. That's what holiness is. It's perfection of beauty and character. Jesus is, God the Father is in a league all by himself, right?

[19:32] In 1 Samuel 2, verse 2, Hannah prayed, There is none holy like the Lord, for there is none beside you. There is none beside you. I mean, all throughout Isaiah, Jesus said, God says, Besides me, there is no other, right?

He is holy. And the disciples have been drawn into the Father and his holiness through Jesus. When Jesus goes on to pray, he says, 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, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. See, Jesus has preserved the disciples in the Father's name.

He has kept them. He has guarded them. He has protected them. Jesus is, as he says in John 10, the good shepherd, right? He's the good shepherd. He protects the sheep from the enemies, from the wolves.

And while it might seem like he failed in this task, in one instance, right, Judas was lost. The reality is, and we looked at this multiple times now in preaching through John, Judas' defection, Judas' betrayal was something foreordained by God.

[20:49] All right, Jesus says here that the Scripture might be fulfilled. We looked at that in John 13. It was a fulfillment of Scripture that Judas would betray Christ. And we saw then that God wields, He wields, even the schemes, the plots of wickedness, the plots of the evil to bring about His redemption, His plan.

So this was something foreordained by God. Jesus did not lose Judas out of failure. Okay, this was according to the eternal plan of God. The point here, though, the point here is that Jesus has faithfully preserved His sheep.

And now He's petitioning the Father as He's about to leave. He's saying, Father, would You do the same? Right? Would You do the same? Would You preserve? Would You guard the sheep? And I already quoted from John 10.

Now, multiple times, but in that, Jesus had said, My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I am the Father, and I am the Father, and I am the Father. It's beautiful.

[22:01] Kept in the Father's name. Okay, but what does it actually look like? Okay, because that's like sort of an abstract concept. Like, what does it look like for the disciples to be kept in the Father's name?

Now, fortunately, in this prayer, Jesus does not leave the painting abstract. Like, He's giving it color. He's giving it clarity in these verses. And here's the first thing. It's preserved in God's unity.

See, Jesus prays, keep them in Your name, that they may be one, even as we are one. And look, you know, being kept in the Father's name, being preserved, it looks like being united together, all of the disciples of Christ, being united together with a God-like oneness.

Right? Father sharing His life with the Son, sharing His life with the Spirit. Now, bringing the disciples into this, into one family, one body. Now, this is the oneness that the Father and the Spirit and the Son have enjoyed from eternity past, right?

And we're brought into that divine life. It looks like unity. Now, next week, Jordan's going to be preaching on the final section of John 17, and that becomes an even more major theme, the unity of the church.

[23:15] And I should have mentioned, so Jesus is praying for the eleven, right? For the eleven who are right here before Him. But, spoiler alert, is in verse 20, He makes it real clear that I'm not just praying for them, actually.

I'm praying for all of those who will come to believe in my name. So this prayer here very much applies to the whole church of God, to all of the disciples of Jesus Christ. And they will be preserved in God's unity.

They're also going to be preserved in God's joy. But now I'm coming to you and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

So being kept in the Father's name, it looks like the disciples being filled with the joy of Jesus.

Right? That unshakable joy that we talked about. That sorrow being turned into joy that cannot be taken away.

Jesus has made the same exact statement now. This is the third time He's said this. Joy. Preserved in God's unity, preserved in God's joy, preserved in God's word.

[24:17] We're going to talk about it more in a bit. But He says, I have given them your word. Right? In the first part of the prayer, we saw the disciples had received the word. They have believed the word.

Jesus has given them the word. And He's going to send the Spirit to guide them into the truth of God's word. So being kept in the Father's name, it looks like clinging to the word of God.

Right? Being shaped, being nourished by the word. Letting the Spirit guide us into all the revelation of God's word made clear in the personal work of Christ.

Right? Who is the word. Who is the truth. Preserved in God's holiness. Now, I'm going to say this explicitly, but first, I mean, He's saying, Holy Father, keep them in your name.

Okay? Holy Father. That's the reason that's the reason Jesus says holy. Keep them in your name. And then down here in verse 14, He says, The world has hated them because they are not of the world.

[25:15] We talked about the angel priests on this in John 16. 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.

In the world, but not of the world. This is, John 17 is where that phrase comes from if you've heard that before. In the world, but not of the world. In verse 16, Jesus had said that the Father had given Him, the disciples, out of the world.

Out of the world. But then in verse 14 and 16, Jesus says, They're not of the world. So they're taken out of the world. They're not of the world. But then He says, Don't take them out of the world.

He's not taking them out. He wants them in the world. And they're going into the world. We'll see in verse 18. What's going on here? Jesus' disciples, they have been spiritually taken out of the world, transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of light.

But Jesus doesn't want them to leave the world. He wants them in the world. Permission, which we're going to talk about more later. The Holy Father, He gave His name to Jesus, right?

[26:19] And Jesus manifested that holy name to the disciples. And they are now called in the world to manifest that holy name to the world. So in the world, but not of the world.

Because the disciples of Christ are holy, like the Father, distinct, set apart while remaining in the world. The character of God, it's His love, right?

It's His righteousness. It's His selflessness. These things haven't been made clear in the personal work of Christ, right? It's His justice.

It's His joy. His anger towards sin. Like, all of these things constitute God's character, God's holiness, His compassion, His zeal. And God wants the disciples to be kept in His name, right?

Be kept in His name. Not like the world, like Him. Not like the world. Also kept from the evil one, He says. See, all of the characteristics that I just mentioned, the characteristics of God the Father, the Holy One, they are in direct contradiction to the devil.

[27:30] Right? To what He wants, to His character. The liar, the accuser, the one who prowls around, you know, seeking someone to devour. So Jesus is praying here that the disciples would be kept from His grasp, from the grasp of Satan.

And this is a prayer that Jesus teaches us to pray, right? In the Lord's Prayer. It's the last petition of the Lord's Prayer. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6.13 So being kept in the Father's name, it's being preserved in God's unity, God's joy, God's word, God's holiness.

And this is Jesus' desire for His disciples. This is His desire. Preserved. Preserved in all those things. Now when I think about the preservation of the saints, there's another image that comes to my mind.

And it's one that we see in Scripture. So we see the sheep-shepherd metaphor all throughout Scripture. There's another one that God employs specifically talking about preservation. And that is of an eagle, right?

[28:33] An eagle hovering over its nest, hovering over its young ones. In Psalm 91, as an example, it says that he who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

He, being God, will cover you with His pinions. And under His wings you will find refuge, His faithfulness as a shield and a buckler.

So how do we seek shelter in God? How do we abide in His shadow and take refuge under His wings in order to be protected and preserved by Him?

Well, He's given us many means. One, which is clear from this text, is steeping ourselves in the Word. Right? Steeping ourselves in the Word. There's preservation when we are immersed in the Word of God.

Right? Steeping ourselves in prayer. Preservation is found as we go before the Father on our knees, praying. Committing ourselves to the weekly gathering.

[29:37] Right? The preservation of God. His preservation of us in unity, in joy, in holiness, in the Word. That happens here week in and week out as we gather together seeking refuge here under the wings of the Almighty.

Engaging in intentional discipleship. Like this is another means for God's preservation of His church is that we would be a people engaged in discipleship. That happens, you know, in our community groups and we're praying that this would happen more and more in, you know, one-on-one conversations throughout the week.

Who are you discipling? I asked this a few weeks ago. Who are you discipling? Who's discipling you? These are questions I'm going to be asking more often. This is good for us to engage in intentional discipleship.

God uses those relationships, discipling relationships, to preserve His church in the ways that we've talked about. Right? As we pursue these means, so the Word, the prayer, the weekly gathering, discipleship, as we pursue these means, we're going to collectively find that as a body, that Jesus' prayer for our preservation is being fulfilled.

Like, we're going to find that. And as one brother pointed out this week in our community group, you know, it's really easy for us to get discouraged when we don't see these things coming to pass, right?

[30:57] Like, when through my own failure or through the failure of a brother or sister, you know, unity seems just like out of reach. Out of reach. Where is unity? When joy seems eclipsed by sorrow.

We face a lot of sorrows in life, right? When God's Word seems to just bounce off my head. Like, it seems to have no effect in one ear, out the other. Or maybe when the world or the devil just seem to have this firm hold on us or maybe on somebody else that we care about deeply, conforming us into their image, right?

Like, we get discouraged when we don't see these things coming to pass. But I want us to remember something. Jesus Christ, who promised the disciples now four different times that if you pray to the Father in my name, it's going to happen, right?

He's praying this prayer. Like, I'm not even praying. Jesus is praying this prayer. The Son of God is praying this prayer on behalf of His disciples. And do you think that the Father is going to say no? Somebody say no to that question.

Do you think the Father is going to say no? No! No! He's not going to say no. The Father is going to answer this prayer in the affirmative for His church. It's guaranteed.

[32:15] Church, these things will surely come to pass in the church. God is preserving His church in unity, in joy, in holiness, in the Word.

God is doing that. He will do that. That is a promise from God. Jesus prayed these things for His church. They will come to pass. So church, take heart.

Take heart when you're discouraged in those ways. God is working even when you cannot see it.

He's working, I promise you. He's working even when I can't see it. God is at work in His people.

He is the shepherd of this church. The elders here, we're just under shepherds. Jesus is the shepherd. If we were the shepherds of this church, y'all should just go somewhere else.

That's not good. Jesus is the shepherd. So we can take heart. He is that mighty eagle. He's guarding His young. He's preserving His people.

[33:13] He's preserving His people right here. His people. And if this church ever falls apart, then we must have been off the rails. We must have been off the rails.

God's preserving the church of Christ until that day when He comes back and brings His bride to the Lord. preserving us in unity and joy and His word and holiness.

So let us, even when we're not seeing these things happen, let's pursue it. Let's pursue these things in all the ways that He has promised. Jesus prays for the disciples' preservation, right, to be kept in the Father's name and then He prays for their sanctification.

Dedicated for the Father's work. Now Jesus, He repeats Himself, He just said this in verse 14, He says it again, They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

So He's reiterating, He called His Father holy. He said that they're not in the world, they're not of the world, but they're in the world. He's praying that we would be kept from an evil one.

[34:21] And now He's reiterating, they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. There's a distinction that is being made here. The world, it's rebellion against God the Father, which has happened from the beginning.

The disciples, who are holy, set apart, distinct, other, like God. And then He says this, Sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. Sanctify them in the truth. That Greek word translated sanctify, it's actually the same one that Jesus uses in verse 19.

He says, For their sake I consecrate myself. Sanctify, consecrate. Those are the same Greek words. You might call it, and they're also related to the word holy. So holy, holiness, sanctify, consecrate.

You might call those the holiness word group. All of them are talking about something or someone being set apart, right? Being specially dedicated, made distinct from other things for service to the Lord.

[35:26] Now this, this is Old Testament ceremonial language here. The sanctify, consecrate. See, in the Old Testament, if you read through the law, Exodus, number, Deuteronomy, wow, Exodus, Leviticus, number, Deuteronomy, you will see that gifts, offerings, vessels, right, spoons, cups, the priests, the people, like, all of these things were consecrated, were to be consecrated to the Lord, right?

So things, people, were set apart, distinct, for holy service to the Lord. And Jesus is saying here that his disciples are also to be, right?

They are to be consecrated, sanctified, set apart, distinct, dedicated unto the Lord. And specifically, he says, sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. So disciples are to be sanctified in the truth of God's word. Right? We've seen it, you know, it's God's word that reveals his holiness to us, right?

It reveals his nature, his character, his essence. It's God's word that shapes us into that character. Right? Sanctify them in your word. And in John's gospel, we've seen over and over again how Jesus himself is the word.

[36:51] Right? He is the word. The word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we have seen his glory. Right? The word became flesh and it's Jesus. And Jesus said in John 14, I am the way and the truth.

Jesus is the truth. Right? So, so we are made holy, made distinct, made like God as we are shaped by, as we are conformed to the revelation of God's word in Christ Jesus.

Right? Sanctification in truth. So in short, what is sanctification in truth? Okay, I thought of two words here.

It's first, it's a cleansing. Sanctification in truth is a cleansing in Christ. So through the cleansing of God's word, which happens in the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus' disciples are made holy.

Now this is both a one-time event and it's also a billions of times event. Right? It happens at conversion. One time, we are sanctified.

[37:51] But then we need to be sanctified over and over and over and over and over again until that day when we will be finally sanctified. Right? There's a past of sanctification, there's a present, and there's a future.

So it's a one-time event that we're dedicated to the Lord and then over and over and over again. Now Jesus had said in John 13, you might recall, after he washed the disciples' feet, he says, the one who has bathed does not need to wash except for his feet, but is completely clean.

Similar idea. The one who's bathed is the one who has been cleansed in the word of God at once for all. But that person still needs to be washed over and over and over again. We need to be continually cleansed in the word of Christ.

Now remember, the Father, he has given Jesus' disciples to him out of the world, right? But they remain in the world, but no longer of the world, right?

We're cleansed and need to be continually cleansed by the word. Why? In order to maintain that distinction, that holy distinction. So Jesus intends for us to be salt and light.

[38:58] That's what he says in the Sermon on the Mount. Salt and light. If you lose the saltiness, it's not good for anything but to be thrown away, right? Distinct. Holy. And this kind of flows into the next thing because sanctification and truth is also a commissioning like Christ.

So it's a cleansing in Christ. It's a commissioning like Christ. So the fact that it's a commissioning is clear from the Old Testament use of these words, of consecration, sanctification, because people, things, they were consecrated, you know, not just to be put on a trophy case, but for actual service, like for service unto the Lord.

And so Jesus makes this clear, this similar sense clear when he says, as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. Right?

Like the Father sent his Son, who is perfectly holy, in every possible sense of that word, right, into the world. He took on human flesh.

So the Holy God did not remain distinct in the sense of isolated from the world, but he actually incarnated. He became man. He walked among sinful men, right, dedicated to carrying out the Father's work.

[40:16] Right? And what was that work? We've seen that. The work was to beckon sinners, to call sinners to himself for eternal life. That was the work that Christ was given by the Father. And you know, it baffled, flabbergasted the Pharisees that Jesus would eat with sinners, tax collectors and sinners.

Jesus told them in Matthew 9, 12, in response, those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Right? I came, not to call the righteous, but sinners.

And Jesus called called these 11 sinful men out of the world, right, to be cleansed in himself, and then having been made holy, he's now commissioning them to themselves go into the world and fulfill that same mission and purpose.

That same mission and purpose. And church, that same mission and purpose is ours today. It's ours today. See, we are not of the world. Right? God has, he's plucked us out of the world. He's made us holy and distinct as we've been cleansed in the word of God, but he has sent us back into the world to fulfill this very same mission and purpose. Right?

[41:29] To rescue sinners, to beckon sinners into the family of God. Right? To make disciples. This is the Great Commission. It's another version of the Great Commission here.

Calling men to Christ and teaching them to observe everything that Christ has commanded them. And this concept is really important because, you know, some Christians might think that I need to be isolated from the world.

Like, we're over here doing our holiness thing and the world's over there in some sort of like monastic form. That's not it. Right? Distinct from the world does not mean isolated from the world. But, in the world does not mean like the world. Right? It doesn't mean conforming to the world's ideologies, conforming to the world's standards. See, Jesus is, he's holding up both things here. We're distinct. We're holy as a people of God like him. But, fulfilling his saving mission, we are in the world by calling them out of it. And this is missional holiness.

[42:29] This is what I'm talking about when I say missional holiness, which is the title of the sermon here. Our missional holiness. Sanctification in truth is a cleansing and commissioning because of Christ.

Jesus says next, and for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth. He's pointing forward again.

He's pointing forward to what's about to happen. Right? Apart from Jesus first consecrating himself to accomplish the Father's work, the disciples would have no chance of themselves being set apart for the Father's work.

See, the disciples have a giant problem that they cannot solve, that the law of Israel could not solve. It's sin. Right? The same problem that you and I have today.

It's sin. We have a sin problem. Sin, it separates us from God. It makes us unclean. We have a stain of sin that cannot be erased. Now, under the Old Testament law, an unblemished lamb, right, would be consecrated, devoted to the Lord, and sacrificed to make atonement for the sins of the people.

[43:49] And if you remember, back in John 1, when Jesus approaches John the Baptist, what did John the Baptist say? He says, Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

He's pointing forward to that sacrificial atonement that Christ, the perfect, spotless Lamb of God, would make on the cross to take away our sin. Hebrews, oh man, Hebrews is such a beautiful book. Every chapter is pointing forward to the better, more perfect sacrifice of Christ. In chapter 10, verse 11 to 14, the author says, in every priest, we talk about the sacrificial system in Israel, every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, right, over and over again, over and over again, you know how bloody that would be like?

Over and over again, they're slaughtering animals, the blood is running over to make atonement for the sins, right? The life was in the blood, and without the shedding of blood, there was no forgiveness. Over and over again, the priest is making sacrifices repeatedly, can't take away sins, but when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet, now listen to this, for by a single offering, he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

Right, Jesus dedicated himself on the cross, right, he consecrated himself to make atonement for our sins. D.A.

[45:22] Carson writes that Jesus dedicates himself to the task of bringing in God's saving reign, right, as God's priest, his mediator, and prophet, his revealer, because we talked last week in the cross, the glory of God is revealed in Christ, but the purpose of this dedication is that his followers may dedicate themselves to the same saving reign, the same mission to the world.

So he consecrates himself that we also would be consecrated in truth, sanctified in truth. We too would deny ourselves, right, daily dying to the flesh and take up our cross and follow him in his path to institute his saving reign to the nations.

One of my favorite games when I was a kid, in gym class or just in a group of people is capture the flag. Surely you should do this, capture the flag, great game, you haven't done it wrong.

I don't know if you know about capture the flag, but there's two sides, and at least in gym, you'd have a hula hoop with a flag, and the whole goal of the game was to run across, grab the flag, and come back, and the game is over.

Now, I was on a work trip with my junior high youth group in Tennessee, and I still remember the most, I didn't remember the spiritual things, but I do remember the game of capture the flag that we played.

[46:55] It was like the most epic game of capture the flag, under the cover of night, and we had the whole command ground, was the boundaries. We had a rule model though, that instead of, if you, in a normal game, if you go into your opponent's side, and they tag you, then you go to jail.

But in the way that we played, if you go to the opponent's side, and they tag you, then you join their team. You become part of their team. Now, as I was thinking about this, this was kind of like Israel's role.

Israel was here, isolated, in their little pocket of the world, and they were trying to draw in the nations. They were being holy and distinct, and their hope was that the nations would be drawn in and then worship God, become sort of part of Israel in a sense.

But then Jesus comes and he mods the mod. So Jesus himself, he goes into enemy territory. He goes behind enemy lines and he captures people's hearts and he draws them out of darkness and into light, into his own team.

And he's beckoning them, get off that sinking ship, the world is going to be destroyed. It's set for doom. He said that he judges the world and the enemy of the world.

[48:17] But he's going behind the enemy lines, friends, to capture hearts. And he's left us here to do the same thing. That's what we're here for, to go behind enemy lines in the world and beckon sinners to his victorious side.

Now we're an alien outpost. We're in hostile territory and we're beckoning people out of the world and into the kingdom of light. that's where eternal life is found.

That's our job. That's why this church exists, is to beckon people into God's kingdom and family.

And he wants to use our distinction, our holiness, to do that, to compel sinners from the world into the church.

And all of that, all of that, it brings glory to the Father. Everything is for his honor and praise. And that's why Jesus started this whole prayer all about God's glory. All about God's glory.

So I want to ask, what are we, to maintain that distinction, right, that holy distinction, what are we cleansing our minds and our hearts in? What are we allowing to cleanse?

[49:35] You know, we can watch news endlessly, right, we can watch TV, we can scroll endlessly through Facebook, through Instagram, what kind of cleansing is that doing to our minds and to our hearts?

Or, as Jesus calls us to here, we can cleanse ourselves in his word, in the word. And that preserves us in the holiness of God.

we talked about discipleship already, right? Like, this is another means of our cleansing in the word of God, it's engaging in the fellowship of the church, nearly groups, and one-on-one discipleship.

So I want to ask again, who are you discipling? And who's discipling you? This isn't, and pray about this. Like, don't just, you don't have to have to, like, launch into this, like, pray about it, for real. Like, God, who are you leading me to, to disciple?

Who should I ask to mentor me? Because I need mentoring, right? I need mentoring, right? The elders here need mentoring. We're asking people to help disciple us, and in that way, we're being cleansed in the truth of God's word.

[50:50] We've got to maintain our distinction, right? And I've said that it's important also to say, like, why, why do we need to maintain our distinction? Why is it so important?

Well, one, it's for God's glory, like, His holiness. He wants us to look like Him. But if we look like the world, what are we asking the world to join, right? Like, first of all, there's no compelling reason for the world to join us if we look just like them.

Like, why would I join you guys on Sunday morning and Tuesday if you just do all the same things that I do? That's, I mean, there's better ways to spend your time, right? But secondly, if they do join and we look just like them, what have they just given their faith to?

Maybe not the one true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Like, what have they just given their faith to? And for decades, the American church was bringing all sorts of people through the front door by looking just like the world.

And they gave their faith to what, though? By God's grace, he's preserved some of them and given them a true faith in him. But we need to be distinct because we're beckoning the world to God, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent.

[51:59] And this, too, church discipline is not a very popular topic in the American church. But the reason for it is because we have got to, for the glory of God and our witness to the world, we've got to maintain our distinction as holy people, dedicated to the Lord.

And so we practice church discipline for God's glory and the sake of the world and the sake of the help of this church, maintaining our holy distinction from the world, claims in the truth.

And then we are commissioned with that truth, right? We're commissioned with that truth. So moms that are here, it's so easy in parenting, and I feel like especially for you moms to downplay the role that you have at home because it's like the same every day, every day, the same thing, right?

The same conversations, the same discipline scenarios, like is any change ever going to happen? But you are being, you're manifesting in your homes the holy father, right?

Beckoning your children. And it might take years, right? You're beckoning your lost children to escape from the world and join God's kingdom of life. That is such an important task.

[53:20] I know it feels like, you know, groundhog day over and over again. But it's such an important task. And it's so easy, we read this on the way here, it's so easy for us to become like our children in their anger, in their tantruming, right?

So easy for us to become like them. But God's called us to be holy as he is holy and to lead them to Christ in their righteousness. So hard, you may be guys, like I've only been on a submarine a little bit, I went under the way one time, once, and I don't think I want to do it again afterwards.

For you to maintain distinction in your jobs, it's hard, right? It's hard in any workplace, in any secular environment, it is hard to maintain the distinction. But God wants you to be a beacon of light on that submarine, right?

He wants you to manifest his selfless love. Like how loving are the rest of your crew, right? There's not a very loving environment, but if you manifest love of God, if you manifest integrity and a work ethic as a bond servant of Christ, you know, and not willing to compromise like the world, not willing to gossip about everybody else, not willing to demean other people, you're drawing people to Christ.

And you might not see it, you might not, but you are planting seeds that somebody else might water and God might give the growth and bring people into eternal life, into eternal life.

[54:59] And guys, we, we had Randy Matthews here last week, we had Ryan vinyl, we've been praying for Harold and Christina Hall, all missionaries going overseas, right, to the nations, to the nations with the gospel.

And we're, we're here because disciples have gone to the nations. You didn't know, like, this is not where the gospel started. It started in Palestine, right, that's where Jesus was.

The gospel has gone to the nations, that's why we even reached for it. And there are more nations out there, there are unreached people groups out there that need the gospel, they need people to go, right, they need to be sent like Andrew was praying before.

So are we praying for, like we might be here, and that's totally fine, we've got our own mission field, but are we praying for gospel advancement throughout the whole world? Are we praying for that?

Are we praying that God would raise up laborers to go into the harvest? That's one of the specific things that Jesus tells us to pray for in Matthew, who says to pray for laborers to go to the harvest.

[55:58] So that's a prayer in his name, right there. That's a prayer in Jesus' name. Pray that prayer, and you will affect change. We're going to

affect change on the other side of the world if we pray those kinds of prayers.

And I want to ask lastly, is the Lord calling you, is he calling you into missions, into maybe even vocational missions? Look, he might not be, but we should be asking the Lord these things, because this is his heart.

His heart is that his saving reign will be manifested to the nations. And I'm praying that the Lord raises up missionaries from this room, people that are going to go with the gospel to the world, kids that are here right now, that are going to go with the gospel to the nations, right, and back in people, abandon that sinking ship, right?

There is a victorious Savior who wants you to be part of his family, part of his kingdom. This has always been his desire. That his people would be preserved, that his people would be sanctified, that his people would be made holy for his mission and glory.

You see that in Solomon, King Solomon prayed, after dedicating the temple, he prayed this prayer, he says, when a foreigner who is not of your people Israel, comes from a far country for your name's sake, for they shall hear of your great name and your mighty hand and your outstretched arm, when he comes and prays toward this house, the temple that they were dedicating, here in heaven, your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name.

[57:44] That was Solomon's prayer. And then Israel failed, like over and over again. Israel failed to maintain their holy distinction from the world.

They failed to beckon the nations to worship the only true God. But now, that prayer of King Solomon, 1000 BC, that prayer, God's plan for his people, has been guaranteed in the person and work of Christ.

A new age has dawned. But instead of drawing the nations to a physical location, the temple in Jerusalem, God has scattered his church abroad, he's scattered us to be the temple, his presence among the nations.

This is God's plan. This has been from the beginning. And we know that the Father answered Jesus' prayer in John 17. He answered that already for the 11 disciples.

He answered that. He brought unity to the church. He brought thousands of souls into the kingdom. And he's continuing to answer this prayer in every generation of Christ followers.

[58:50] The Father is preserving his people holy for the sake of fulfilling his mission to compel sinners out of the world into his kingdom, which can't be shaken, and for the sake of the eternal glory of his great name.

Back at 2, verse 10, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. So church, in all the ways that we talked about today, we can hasten the fulfillment of that promise through our missional holiness for God's glory.

Fill this world. Please pray with me. Amen.