

A Prayer For His Own (pt. 1)

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bibles and open them up to John chapter 17 this morning. John chapter 17 is our normal practice to just walk through books of the Bible.

And we've been walking through the book of John since last February. And so we've made our way to chapter 17 now. If you didn't bring your own Bible, that's okay. We have Bibles in the seat backs there in front of you.

But I do recommend that you have a Bible open. I want you to see this with your own eyes, not just hear it from my lips, but see the Word of God open before you. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

And we're in John chapter 17 this morning. I'll read verses 6 through 19. And when you've found that, if you would, please, let's stand in honor of the Word of God. John 17 verses 6 through 19.

Jesus says, I am praying for them.

[1 : 28] I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

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, 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, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

But now I am coming to you. In 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. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth.

[2 : 36] Your word is truth. 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 truth.

This is God's holy, perfect word. Let's bow once more in prayer. Lord, we ask that you would sanctify us now in truth, as we open up and declare your word.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. Amen. Have you ever asked the question, what does Jesus want?

You know, the normal way that we tend to think about things is in terms of what we want, isn't it? Our plans for our life, and maybe, if we're on a good day, how Jesus might fit into our plans for our life.

But have you ever stopped and asked yourself, well, what does Jesus want? What does Jesus want for his people? What does Jesus want for his church?

[3 : 45] What does Jesus want for you? Here in John chapter 17, we are listening in to one of the prayers of Jesus. This is often called the high priestly prayer.

And this is a close-up look into the heart of Christ. We get to listen in to some of Jesus' desires for his people as he spills them out into prayer to the Father.

And here's what I want us to see this morning. This is sort of the big idea for our sermon this morning. It is that Jesus desires wonderful things for his people. Amen. Jesus desires wonderful things for his people.

He came to accomplish these gifts for his people. Here in our passage, he's preparing to go to the cross and die and then rise again to accomplish these things for his people.

Here he's praying and asking the Father, would you take what you have planned? Take what I'm getting ready to accomplish. And would you apply these gifts to my people in full?

[4 : 50] Jesus desires wonderful things for his people. So the questions for us as we walk through this passage together this morning is twofold. Really two questions.

Is what people and what things? What does Jesus want and who does he want them for? And I got to admit to you, I got a little bit carried away with the outline this week with my alliteration bug.

But y'all bear with me. Okay, this is a priestly prayer for a particular people. A priestly prayer for a particular people.

First, I want you to notice here that Jesus, he's praying for a particular people here. And we see this in verses 6 through 10. I want you, again, if you have your Bible open, put your eyes here on the passage.

Verses 6 through 10. We're picking up in the middle of a prayer here. John 17 is one extended prayer between Jesus and the Father. Verses 1 through 5, we saw last week, Jesus was primarily praying for himself.

[5 : 53] And we saw he asked the Father, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had before the world existed. He was praying for himself in verses 1 through 5.

But now in verse 6, and in our passage this morning, he's turning his attention now to pray primarily for his disciples. Look there with me to verse 6.

Jesus says, I hope it's clear.

He's not praying for everyone everywhere. He's praying for a particular group of people in this prayer. Look there to verse 9. He says, Again, I am praying for them.

I am not praying for the world. I am praying for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. Not everyone, but these particular men.

[7 : 12] Specifically, in these verses, it's these particular, specific 11 men. 12 minus Judas. These 11 men who were called to follow Jesus, who have spent the better part of the past three years with him, following him, listening to his teaching, observing his miracles, seeing him day in and day out.

They were blessed to be called to follow Jesus. Not everyone. These men. And you might wonder, as we look at this, you might wonder, well, what in the world makes these 11 men so special?

Why them? Why them in particular? Why were they, out of all the people in that region, in that time, in that area, why these 11 men?

What was it that the Lord saw in them to count them worthy of this sort of blessing? Well, if you've been paying any attention over the last 17 chapters of John, hopefully you would have noticed enough to realize, not a thing.

Not a thing. These 11 disciples, as we've walked through the Gospel of John, I mean, they are a piece of work. They are constantly fumbling and bumbling and confused.

[8 : 31] They don't know who Jesus really is and what he really came to do. They're constantly misunderstanding the person and work of Christ. I think that what we're seeing as we walk through John is that they are not called to follow Jesus because they were qualified.

And I think that that may just be the point. In this prayer, we get to peel back some of the layers here of how these men came to follow Jesus.

This was sheerly God's choosing. Again, I want you to follow this here in the passage. They belonged to God the Father. However, they were given to Jesus.

Jesus called them to follow him and they received Jesus. And although this is primarily a prayer for these 11 men, these 11 disciples, here's what I want us to see, the application for us this morning.

This is how it works for every single Christian. This is the story of how anyone has come to follow Christ.

[9 : 40] Think about it with me. I want you to see it again in the flow of the passage. How does anybody come to be a part of God's people? I want us to see it here in order in four parts.

Belonging, giving, manifesting, receiving. How does anybody come to be a part of God's people? Four parts here in our passage.

Belonging, giving, manifesting, receiving. This is how salvation works. Follow it with me. Our inclusion in the particular people of God, it begins with God.

It begins with God's choosing. Jesus says, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Not everyone, just these 11.

Yours they were, and you gave them to me. Yours they were. Do you hear that? That's belonging language. And you gave them to me.

[10 : 40] You remember last week from John 17, verse 2. You can look up there a few verses earlier. The authority that God the Father has given to God the Son, The authority that God the Father has given to the Messiah, Verse 2 of chapter 17, Is to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him.

In the eternal, sovereign wisdom of God, These men belonged to God. And because they belonged to God, They specifically were then given to Christ.

And Christ was given authority to give them eternal life. Why? Because they belonged to God. And because they were given to Christ, What did Jesus do? He manifested God's name to them.

He says in verse 8, I have given them the words you gave me. He declared and manifested the truth to them, The glory of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And because they were gods, And because God gave them to Christ, And because Christ manifested the glory of God to them, What happened? They received Him. Of course they did.

[11 : 52] How could they not? This is an unbreakable chain of God's sovereign plan of salvation, To draw sinners into His particular people. That's the flow. Do you see it?

One more time. Who belongs to the particular people of God Is those who belonged to God before the ages began. Who were then given to Christ, That He might accomplish their salvation, That He might manifest the glory of God to them Through the word, Through the gospel, And that they might receive Him by faith.

Christian, Peel back the layers of your own salvation for a moment. Think through your own testimony for a moment. I'm so excited that at the end of the service this morning, We get to hear Bailey's testimony.

We get to hear a story of how God has saved one individual person. Think back on your own salvation story. If you have placed your faith in Christ, There's only one way that that's happened.

There's a thousand different variations of this story in the room, In the world today. But there's only one way that this happened. The word came to you, And you believed it.

[13 : 06] We only see the last two steps of this process in our experience, don't we? The word has come to you, And you have received it. But peel back the layers a bit. How did you come to believe it?

Well, it was delivered to you. It was delivered to you. Someone, somewhere, Maybe in a church service like this, Maybe a gospel tract, Maybe it was a conversation with a friend, Maybe you had a faithful praying family member.

Somehow, Some way, The word of Christ was delivered to you. You were blessed to be placed in that time, That time, In that place, In that period of time, In that place of the world, Where the gospel might come to you.

And whether it was the first time, Or the thousandth time you heard it, For whatever reason, That time it hit, Didn't it? Or that time, For whatever reason, Your eyes were opened up, To the glory of God, And the gospel of Christ.

Oh, why? Why you? Why not the person next to you? Why that time? Why not the thousand times before that? Why did you suddenly believe the truth, And not your brother, Not your sister, Not your cousin?

[14 : 19] What did God see in you, To count you worthy of being brought into the people of God? Like the disciples, Church, Not a single thing. Not a single thing.

It is because, In God's infinite wisdom, By his incredible, Unfathomable grace, Christian, You belonged to God in eternity.

And he gave you to Christ. And the word came to you in power. And you received it. You believed it. Our belonging to the particular people of God, Is God arranged, Son accomplished, Spirit applied, By the grace of God alone, That no man may boast, In the presence of God.

Now, I recognize there may be some, In the room this morning, Who are far from the Lord. There may be some this morning, Who have, Have come to church services, Who have heard the gospel a thousand times, Who are very familiar, With the word of God, But have not yet, Put their faith in Christ.

I want you to hear, This, The invitation to come, And belong to the people of God, Is for you, This morning. If you would turn from your sin, And trust in Christ, This moment, You will be brought out of the domain of darkness, And transferred into the kingdom of his beloved son.

[15 : 45] This moment, You can be adopted into the family of God, If you would only receive him, By faith. But know, That that receiving, Is because, You belonged to him, In eternity past.

Have you received him? Have you received him? If you have, The church, I have good news, The rest of this passage, Everything that Jesus prays for his disciples, Here in this passage, Is for you.

This is point number two. Second, The priestly prayer, We've covered, Who he's praying for, Now this is, What is he praying for? For them. Verses 11 through 19.

This is what Jesus wants, For every believer. This is what he has purchased, For his people, On the cross. These are, Blood bought promises, For every believer.

Five prayers, Here, That I see in the second half of our passage. Each one of these is, Is so glorious. Five prayers. Prayer number one, He asks for our perseverance.

[16 : 52] Perseverance. Look there to verse 10. He says, All mine are yours, And yours are mine, And I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, But they are in the world, And I am coming to you.

Keep them in your name, Which you have given me. Keep them, Keep them, Keep them, In your name, Which you have given me.

He says in verse 12, While I was with them, I kept them in your name, Which you have given me. I have guarded them, Not one of them has been lost, Except for Judas, Who he calls the son of destruction.

And that wasn't an accident, That was that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now he says, Father, Keep them in your name. Keep them. Well, This is a prayer for perseverance.

Better yet, It's a prayer for, For sovereign preservation, Of the saints. And we believe in something called, The perseverance of the saints. Have you heard that term before?

[17 : 53] Perseverance of the saints. And what that means, Is that anyone who is truly a believer, Anyone who is in Christ, Anyone who is a part of the people of God, Will make it to the end.

That's perseverance of the saints. But what undergirds, And supports that perseverance of the saints, Is the preservation of the father. It's the preservation of God the father, Who keeps a hold of his people, To ensure that they will make it to the end.

Let me ask you something, Christian. What is it? How do you know, That tomorrow morning, You're going to wake up believing the gospel? What is it?

In you? What confidence do you have, That you will wake up tomorrow morning, Believing the gospel? Let me ask you a different way. Whose grip do you trust? Your grip on God, Or God's grip on you?

When I walk my kids, Across a busy parking lot, Whose grip do you think I trust? Their grip on me? Or my grip on them?

[19 : 03] No, I do what every good parent ought to do, I say, Take my hand. Right? And he does. And when he grips my hand, I know that he's listening to me, He's trusting me, And I grip his hand, And I'm preserving him, But guess what?

If he ever begins to loosen his grip on me, You know what I do? I tighten my grip on him, I don't let him go, I tighten my grip on him, I pull him closer, I say, No, no, no, You hold my hand, Until we've made it safely across, Why do I do that?

Because he's my child. And I love him. And so it is with those, Who are children of God. Of course, You hold on to him by faith, As he holds on to you, But church, It is his holding on to you, That assures, That you will make it safely, To the other end, Not the other way around.

Our assurance, Of a perseverance of the saints, Our assurance, Is not because we are strong, Not because we are faithful, We can't have assurance, If it depends on us, Our assurance, Is that God himself, Will keep us to the end, He will hold us fast, We just sang, He will hold us fast, For our Savior loves us so, He will hold us fast, Our Father will not release, His grip, On his children, For whom the Son of God has died, But you know what, To take this illustration, A step further, I have a problem, I have three kids, Okay, And that's not a problem, Right, The problem is, I only have two hands, Right, Three kids is a good thing, Two hands, Makes it a little bit difficult, It's not a problem, When my wife is with me, Then we have four hands,

To deal with, But when I'm on my own, And we're crossing a parking lot, I can only grab two hands, And so, Do you know what I do, I'll grab as many hands as I can, But then I say, Hey guys, You grab a hold of one another, Everybody grab a hand, I'm going to hold on to you, You hold on to one another, You hold each other's hands, You make sure that your brother makes it across, You make sure he doesn't run off into traffic, You take ownership for your brother, Who's right beside you, You care for your brother, And that's exactly what the church is meant to do, This is the second prayer here for his people, Look here, It's a prayer for unity amongst God's people, Unity, Did you see that?

[21 : 46] He says, Father, Keep them in your name, So that, What's the result? So that, They may be one, Even, As we, Are one, And we're going to spend more time on this next week, And so I'm going to, I'm going to save some of it for then, Okay, But, But just for now, Know this, Our individual, Vertical unity with God, Through faith in Christ, When you put your faith in Christ, You are united to God, Boom, One, Vertical union, That vertical union with God, Spills out and produces horizontal union with one another, That's the church, That's the church, Now the good news is that God has, Has many hands, Okay, Metaphorically speaking, Many hands, As many hands as he has children to hold on to, And he keeps you vertically firm, He holds you fast, But, But, He also, Expects and commands,

And enables us, As a church, To hold on to one another, And when you join a local church family, Like this, You're joining a family, That locks arms together, And we make sure, We hold each other's hands, And we bring each other along, We ensure that, That one another makes it safely home, That's what Jesus wants for his church, Not only this, Third prayer, Believer, Third prayer, He wants you to have his joy, He wants you to have his joy, Now, Seaweed Bay, We have a mission statement, Our mission, We exist to magnify the glory of God, In the gospel of Jesus Christ, And there's three ways, That we've identified, That we go about that work, Of magnifying God's glory, Do y'all remember what way number one is, What is it,

Members, Help me, Come on, Oh man, We got some work to do, Come on, We enjoy God, We enjoy God, Enjoy, Equip, Evangelize, Come on, Enjoy, Equip, Evangelize, Christ has come, That sinners like us, May know his joy, Now that's unfathomable for us, But can you imagine, Can you imagine the joy, That comes with being the son of God, Can you imagine Jesus' joy, Just for a moment, The joy that comes from, From perfect relationship, With the father, The joy that would come from being sinless, You know sin is the thief of joy, And our idols, Our sins, Although they promise us joy, They never deliver, Sin is the thief of joy, The joy of knowing, That you are in perfect right standing with God,

That nothing at all can separate you, From the love of God, That the grave itself, Can't divide you from him, That no matter what's laying ahead of you, That you have glory, At the end of the day, To look forward to, Can you imagine the joy, Of being Jesus, Friend, And the good news of the gospel, Is that, Jesus came to give, That joy to us, Jesus has come, To give us what he alone has earned, And he gives it freely, To sinners like us, By faith alone, We have received full access, To God the father, Through Jesus Christ, We have received, Full atonement for sin, Through Jesus Christ, We have received, Full pardon, Forgiveness for our sins, We have received, His righteousness, Credit to our bankrupt accounts, By faith, We have received, Hope beyond this life, That no matter what this life, Throws at us, That nothing can separate us,

From the love of God, In Christ Jesus our Lord, Even death itself, Can only bring us closer to him, This is his joy, That he has given to us, Church, Are you rejoicing, And what God has done for you, In the gospel, That's what Jesus wants, For his people, And not only this, Prayer number four, He desires our protection, In this world, Our protection, In this world, You know that joy, We know in this life, Is not without trials, Is it?

[26 : 25] We do not live, In a perfect world, Following Christ, Will not make your life easy, Look to verse 14, He says, I've 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, Listen to this, He says, I do not ask that you take them, Out of the world, Why not?

That's what we want, Right? We would prefer, But he says, I do not ask that you take them, Out of the world, But that you keep them, From the evil one, Church, This isn't a prayer, For our escape, From the world, It's a prayer, For our protection, In the world, Christian, We should know, That we are, In the middle, Of a spiritual battle, At all times, As long as we are, In the world, We are not, In peace time, Coming to Christ, It gives you, Eternal peace, But we are not, In peace time, Yet, That time will come, When Christ returns, And sets all things right, But right now, Until the return of Christ, We are in, Spiritual battle, And we are warned, 1 Peter 5, 8, Be sober minded, Be watchful, Your adversary, The devil, Prowls around, Like a roaring lion, Seeking someone, To devour, Ephesians 6, 11, It tells us,

Put on the whole armor of God, That you may be able, To stand against the schemes, Of the devil, Do you think the devil, The devil is, Is scheming, Against you? For we do not wrestle, Against flesh and blood, But against the rulers, Against the authorities, Against the cosmic powers, Over this present darkness, Against the spiritual forces, Of evil, In the heavenly places, Therefore, Take up the whole armor of God, That you may be able, To withstand, In the evil day, And having done all, To stand firm, Church, We need to know, That as long as, We are in this world, We are in the devil's crosshairs, And we are in a spiritual battle, At all times, We take comfort, In the prayer of Jesus, And in the cross of Jesus, That he's defeated that enemy, And he's prayed for our protection, But church, We're called to armor up, Are you prepared, Every day,

For the spiritual battle, That lays ahead of you? Fifth and finally, Fifth and finally, He prays, For our holiness, What does Jesus want, For his people?

He wants you to be holy, They are not of the world, Just as I am not of the world, Sanctify them, In the truth, He prays, Your word, Is truth, 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 truth, Church, Christ, Desires, His people, To be, Holy, To be, To be distinct, Ephesians chapter 5, Calls husbands to love their wives, As Christ loved the church, And gave himself up for her, Why?

[29 : 56] That he might wash her as water, With water, With the word, That he might present her to himself, In holiness, In splendor, Without blemish, Christ didn't just die to save you, He died to conform you into his image, To make you holy, So he prays here, Lord, Don't take them out of the world, Keep them there, But make them distinct from the world, Make them weird, Do y'all, Do y'all, Do y'all realize how weird Christians are?

Do you ever feel out of place, In the world? I mean, My goodness, If you don't, If you have never once felt out of place, Around your non-believing friends, Felt, Felt a little bit of tension, In the workplace, If you've never wrestled with how to watch a movie, The pressures that face us in the world that we live in, Every day, If you don't feel out of place here, Something's wrong, And Jesus calls you to be distinct from the world, I mean, Have you ever paid much attention to the way the New Testament describes Christians?

We're called exiles, Sojourners, Strangers, Pilgrims, None of these terms suggest any lasting belonging here and now, And yet the Lord says, Don't take them out of the world, Keep them there, But make them distinct, Why?

That the world might know, That there is a God, Who makes sinners holy, That the world might know, That there is a Savior, Who can redeem any sinner, From the most heinous, Despicable life imaginable, He can take them, And by His blood alone, He can wash them clean, Transform them, A new creation, So they might be a living witness, To the glory of God, And the gospel of Christ, So that everyone they knew, Would say, Why don't you, You act the way you used to act, Why don't you go out with us, The way you used to go out with us, Why don't you speak the way you used to speak, And you have an opportunity to say, God has washed me clean, By the blood of Jesus, Nothing in me, I didn't up and decide, To be a better man today, The Lord has saved me, By His grace, Church, Are you prepared to make that answer, When you're asked, What's wrong with you?

Jesus wants us to be different, Christ came to save us, And to sanctify us, Church, This is what Jesus wants for you, This is what Jesus wants, For His people, And I'll simply ask you, Again as we close this morning, Is this what you want for yourself?

[32 : 52] Are you praying, And asking the Lord, God would you, Would you keep me in your name? God would you strengthen my faith today?

God would you point my eyes again, And again, And again, And again to the cross of Christ, Because I am distracted, And lured away, Prone to wonder, Lord I feel it, Would you keep me in your name?

Are you asking, Are you asking Him for that? Are you asking Him, To unite your hearts, With your brothers and sisters, And your church family? To knit your hearts together, In love?

Are you asking, Not just for an individual, Relationship with God, But for a fellowship, With other believers, Who will hold you, And carry you safely home? Are you asking, That you might know, Know the joy of the Lord, That you might, Might understand the joy, That comes from being saved, Are you asking, Friend, Are you, Are you praying for the protection, Of Christ from the evil one?

Are you asking, Are you praying, Are you, Are you coming to His word, That you might be, Holy? Church, In just a moment, We have, The privilege of, Of hearing from Bailey, Now I want to let that come, From his lips, Not mine, But I want you to understand, What we're seeing, In baptism, Is a living example, Of everything we're talking about, This morning, And as we go to these waters, In just a moment, I want to encourage you, To be praying for Him, What Jesus has prayed for His people, In this passage, Let's pray, Lord, We praise you, For the cross of Christ, We praise you, For the grace, Of being called your people, We praise you, For everything that he's accomplished, For us on our behalf, We love you, Lord, We pray that if there are any here, Who do not know you, God, Would you put faith, In their hearts right now, Draw them to faith,

[34 : 53] In their Messiah, Lord, Would you bring them, Into the people of God, And for us, The church, Lord, Those who know you, We pray God, That you would take, Everything Christ has accomplished, And apply it to our hearts, By faith, We ask in Jesus name, Amen.