

178. The Gospel of John—17:11-12, 15

“With Jesus Behind the Veil” Part 12

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In our study in John’s Gospel, we have come to Chapter 17 and a deeply personal and intimate prayer between Jesus and His Father—the Holy of Holies prayer.

This prayer is divided up into 3 main parts:

- I. **Jesus Prays for Himself—verses 1-5**
- II. **Jesus Prays for His Disciples—verses 6-19**
- III. **Jesus Prays for All Believers—verses 20-26**

We are currently in the second main part of this prayer—

II. Jesus Prays for His Disciples—verses 6-19

I want to say one more time—at this point Jesus is less than 12 hours from the cross.

When someone is near death, they don’t want to talk about frivolous things like sports and the weather—they want to talk to the people on earth they love the most (family and dear friends) about the things in life that matter most.

Jesus did that with His disciples in Chapters 13 through 16—but now He prays for them to His Father in Chapter 17. Here in these verses Jesus is praying for His disciples from a heart of deep love and concern for their welfare and for the work He was about to turn over to them (Great Commission).

This section of Scripture contains what He was most concerned about for them on the night before His crucifixion—as we have been studying for the last few weeks.

I’ve reworked my outline to make it a little simpler—and so, Jesus’ prayer for His disciples is made up of 3 things:

- A. That the Father would give grace so that their lives would bring Jesus glory—verses 9-10
- B. That the Father would keep them—verses 11-13
- C. That the Father would sanctify them—verses 14-19

We’ve already looked at the first one—

- A. That their lives would bring Jesus glory—verses 9-10

John 17:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹ I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

How is Jesus glorified in us who are His disciples?

1. Jesus is glorified in us—by saving us and us living transformed lives.
2. Jesus is glorified in us—by our trusting Him in this life.
3. Jesus is glorified in us—when we live a holy life.
4. Jesus is glorified in us—by our witness of Him to this world.

B. That they would be kept by the Father—verses 11-12, 15

John 17:11-12, 15 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as *We are*. ¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled...¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one [the devil].

Jesus' prayer to His Father that He would keep His disciples from the devil falls into 4 basic requests:

1. That the Father would Keep them from Damnation
2. That the Father would Keep them from Death
3. That the Father would Keep them from Division
4. That the Father would Keep them from Defilement

1. That the Father would Keep them from Damnation

John 17:11, 12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world [His true disciples], and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me...¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Let me just clarify something that is very important—when Jesus said that none of His disciples was lost except Judas (the “**son of perdition**”)—He wasn't saying that Judas was saved but ‘*slipped through His fingers*’ and was lost (went to hell) because Jesus couldn't *hold* on to Judas all the way to glory.

We know for sure that that wasn't the case—because God's Word tell us that:

John 10:27-28 (NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

John 6:39 (HCSB)

³⁹ This is the will of Him who sent Me: that I should lose none of those He has given Me but should raise them up on the last day.

➤ So then, what's going on with Judas?

The term **“son of perdition”** literally means *“son of hell”*—in other words, Judas was never a *“child of God”* (saved)—he was always a *“child of hell”* (lost).

We know this for sure from what Jesus said about Judas earlier as recorded in John's gospel—

John 6:70-71 (NKJV)

⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil [i.e., 'a child of hell']?" ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

John 13:10-11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean [saved]."

If you take a concordance and look up the word **‘perdition’** in the New Testament—here is a sampling of what you'll find:

Philippians 1:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God.

2 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV)

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition...[This is the only other place in the New Testament where the title ‘son of perdition’ appears—here speaking of the Antichrist]

Hebrews 10:39 (NKJV)

³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition [like Judas], but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Furthermore, not only did Jesus say that Judas was lost because he was never saved—He went on to tell us that Judas' life was all foretold (prophesied) in Scripture (our Old Testament)—

John 17:12 (NKJV)

¹² ...Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

➤ **What Scripture is Jesus referring to?**

Remember that earlier in the evening in the upper room, Jesus told us—

John 13:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.'

Here Jesus is quoting from Psalm 41:9—

Psalm 41:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up *his* heel against me.

But also in Psalm 109:8 Judas' death was prophesied and that his office of apostle was to go to another—

Psalm 109:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Let his days be few, *And* let another take his office.

We know this is a prophecy about Judas because when the apostles were replacing Judas—they quoted it in Acts 1:20—

Acts 1:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.'

I bring all of this out because there are those Christians who think that Judas was once saved but lost his salvation—I hope we have shown you that that is **absolutely incorrect**.

Judas was back then and will forever remain a son of hell!

This takes us back to the last time we were in John's Gospel. As we studied previously, when Jesus prayed to His Father to '**keep**' His disciples (true believers) we said that He is first of all is talking about keeping them (us) from hell (damnation)—which falls under the category of 'eternal security.'

You will be kept (actually as a believer you 'are being kept') because you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit—

Ephesians 1:13 (NKJV)

¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise...

Last time we saw how that a seal was used back then to speak of: 1) *Ownership*; and 2) *Security*

Romans 8 is one of the greatest Chapters in all the New Testament in proving the absolute eternal security of the believer in Christ—a Chapter which starts with "*No condemnation*" and ends with "*no separation*"—

Romans 8:1, 38-39 (NKJV)

¹ *There is* therefore now no condemnation [hell] to those who are in Christ Jesus...

³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

➤ Are you a '*created thing*' this morning? If so, then not even *you* can separate yourself from being in Christ and go to hell.

So, the first request that Jesus made to His Father on His disciple's behalf was that the Father would keep them eternally secure—forever safe from eternal damnation in hell. However, Jesus' prayer to His Father seems to also include that the Father would keep His disciples from an untimely physical death here on earth as well.

2. That the Father would Keep them from Death

Yes, the Lord Jesus prayed that the Father would keep us as His disciples from eternal death in hell—but also that we would be protected from the devil who wants to kill us and remove us from the earth so that we are no longer a threat to his kingdom.

➤ *Why do I think that?* Because of what Jesus goes on to say on the subject—

John 17:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ **I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one** [Satan who wants to kill them].

John 17:12 (NKJV)

¹² **While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.**

John 18:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ **Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,"** ⁹ **that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."** [here physical death seems to be in view]

I bring this up to reinforce the principle of God's sovereignty over our lives and how He has promised us in His Word that until God is done with us—we are invincible—indestructible! Otherwise, Jesus' prayer to the Father in this regard, on our behalf went (and continues to go) *unanswered*.

Revelation 11:3-7 (NKJV)

³ And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵ And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶ These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. ⁷ When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

The Two Witnesses were indestructible until they finished their mission/ministry for God—Also:

John 17:4 (NKJV)

⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

2 Timothy 4:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race ['my earthly ministry'], I have kept the faith.

Tradition says that it was Emperor Domitian who sentenced John the apostle to be boiled in oil for proclaiming Jesus as Savior and Lord—but that the boiling oil had no effect on him (which tells us that until God is through with us, we are indestructible!)

Domitian then ordered John sent to the Isle of Patmos off the coast of Asia Minor, a barren rock that juts up out of the Aegean Sea which also served as a Roman penal colony where prisoners were sent to die. But while John was on Patmos, alone, forsaken and isolated—it was there that Jesus visited him and gave to John the greatest revelation in the Bible—the Book of Revelation.

Sometimes when we're feeling alone, forsaken, and isolated—we're prone to think that God has abandoned us, that He's through with us and that this is how our life is going to end—I'm wondering if John felt that way. But God wasn't through with John—in fact God allowed the isolation for the purpose of revelation!

That could be exactly what God has in mind for you if, this morning, you find yourself in a similar place as John. To show you Jesus in a way you would have never thought possible—to bring revival to your heart and revelation to your life—to lift you to a whole new level of usefulness for God!

After Domitian died in A.D. 96 John was allowed to return to Ephesus where he lived out the remainder of his life and ministry and was buried. But while he was there, in semi-retirement, God through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit had John pen the Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John and the Book of Revelation.

So, Jesus prayed for His disciples that the Father wouldn't let the devil kill them (and us) until they had finished their ministries for God—that until then they would be indestructible!

➤ “Yes, but how do I know when God is finished with me so that I'm no longer 'indestructible!'?”

The simple answer to that question is—when you die God is done with you—until then, since you don't know how long your life will be on the earth—do as Moses prayed:

Psalm 90:12 (NKJV)

¹² So teach *us* to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

None of us knows how many days we will have in our lives—but here we are being told to “make every day count”!

➤ How? By walking with purpose and not wasting our opportunities to be used by God—

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NLT2)

¹⁵ So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶ Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. ¹⁷ Don't act thoughtlessly [don't waste time], but understand what the Lord wants you to do [live with eternal purpose].

Let me end by saying that we can't *add* any days to our lives—but we can sure *subtract* enough days from our lives—through sin and reckless living. Some Christians worry themselves to death—others drink or smoke or use some other substance to hasten themselves into an early grave.

Rest assured, God has allotted enough days in our lives as His children to finish all the work He has given them to do (with extra time for backsliding and 'vacations' and dumb detours into time-wasting hobbies etc.)

But really, the time is too short, the work is too great, and the laborers are too few for us to be wasting any precious time—so get busy!

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower— please, reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Reach out to us [here](#).

Want to know more? Click [here](#).