

John 17:6-16

6 "I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

6 We learned earlier that, to the Hebrews, one's name represented who they are, their character, and nature. Jesus' life was a manifestation of the character of God. Jesus was saying that His life had revealed the very nature of God to the disciples (John 13:13,14).

"*You gave them to me...*" The doctrine of election (God choosing some to be saved and not others) is unavoidable in Scripture. Jesus clearly stated that God gave the disciples to Him. Earlier that evening He stated that the disciples did not choose Him, but rather He chose them (John 15:16). The Apostle Paul writes that we are predestined to salvation (Ephesians 1:11). This is a topic that has divided some of the sincerest believers. Several passages tell us that God chose us because of His foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2; Romans 8:29). In other words, God knew you would yield to the working of the Spirit in your heart. We have free will to reject or accept the love of Jesus revealed to us by the Spirit (Joshua 24:15) He convicts us all of the sin of unbelief. (John 16:8,9). Some of us receive the indictment of the Spirit and are born again. God knew who would.

Predestination and free will work hand in hand. How God does that is beyond my little mind, but we can clearly see both predestination and free will in Scripture. Jesus does not invite us to come to Him when we have no choice, but because we do have a choice (John 5:40). We have been given the free will to choose whom we will serve. It is not God's will that any perish, but some people will refuse the grace of God when the Holy Spirit offers it to them (2 Peter 3:9).

The last part of that verse declares, "*they have obeyed your word.*" That does not mean they have kept all the laws of Moses. As we will see later, believing in Jesus is a fulfillment of all that God asks of us (John 6:40). Jesus stated earlier, God loves them because they love Jesus and believe He came from God (John 16:27).

7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you.

7 The disciples had just declared that they believed He is Messiah, and that He came from God and was returning to God. Jesus had told them over and over that everything He said was from His Father (John 12:49). They finally believed that He was not just an enlightened rabbi, but the heaven-sent Son of God relaying heaven's message to man as the next verse describes (John 16:30).

8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.

8 There was no longer any doubt in the disciples' minds that Jesus was sent from heaven into this world, not like a prophet of old who was simply a man called by God. No, Jesus is God's special revelation of Himself to the world (John 16:28).

9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

9 This prayer began with Jesus praying for Himself, to be glorified and to return to the glory He had from the beginning. That is the portion we studied last week, glorification. This week's portion of the prayer is really dedicated to the disciples' sanctification. The last portion, which we will go over next week, is about us and our unification. However, the portion this week, in which He prays for the disciples, can be applied to us, for we are also disciples with a similar mission.

Jesus specifically said He is not praying for the world at large in this portion of the prayer. He is focusing on the disciples' needs because they belong to God. Because they are God's, they are the target of the enemy (Ephesians 6:11). They need special prayer. We often think the world needs our prayers, and it does, but the world's one great need is simple: to believe in Jesus (Luke 23:34). Those of us who belong to God are under attack and have needs in several specific areas Jesus will address.

10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

10 The disciples belong to God, but God has given them to Jesus. Still, the Father and Son share everything, especially the worship and adoration from the believers. They glorify the Son. They exalt His name, for He has revealed God to them (Psalm 50:23). He has shown them the love of God and the personal concern God has for each of them. We will see next week, the same is true for all of us as well. We give glory to God in the same way Jesus glorifies God, by demonstrating the attributes of God in our own lives (John 15:8). When people see Jesus in us, they see God. That brings glory to the Father and the Son.

So, what are people seeing in our lives? The world demonstrates selfishness. The believer in Jesus should show genuine concern because people are eternal souls for whom Jesus died (1 John 4:7).

11 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.

11 There is no one who understands this cosmic war over the souls of men better than Jesus. That is why when He found Himself in human form, He humbled Himself and became completely obedient to the Father (Philippians 2:6-8). He knows the potential of the enemy of our souls. He knows the weakness of men. He was about to leave this world victorious, but His followers would remain. His prayer was that the Father would protect them by the power of His name. Now remember, that His name includes all that the Father is. He is righteous, just, merciful, gracious, all-powerful, loving, kind and much more. Jesus asked that the power and authority of all that the Father is protect us so that we could be one. Protection for the sake of our unity was Jesus' first request.

He will address this issue of unity more in the last portion of the prayer. But here, thinking of the attack of the enemy on His followers, Jesus prayed the power of the Father would protect them for the sake of unity. When the enemy works His way into our midst in the form of pride, or self-righteousness, or legalism, the result is disunity. If Jesus' followers ended up fighting among themselves, the result would be a lack of unity (Proverbs 16:28). That would end in a mixed and weakened message to the world.

Today too, you can be sure that Jesus is interceding for us to be protected by the power of the name of the Father and Son, that we would be one (Hebrews 7:25). It is that

oneness that declares the message in power. The world cannot lay down its differences for unity for more than a moment. Where there is unity, the Lord commands a blessing (Psalm 133:3).

12 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.

12 Jesus kept them while He was physically with them. Only Judas was lost. Just as those who are chosen are destined because of the choice they will make, so those who are lost are destined because of the choice they will make (Mark 14:21). The prophets could write of Judas in Psalms and Zechariah because God foresaw the choice he would make (Psalm 41:9; 69:25; 109:8; Zechariah 11:12,13).

13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

13 Jesus is praying that the Father protect them that they might have unity, for in unity they will have the full measure of joy. The disciples needed to overhear this prayer. They needed to know that Jesus knew what was coming and chose to go through it. They needed to hear His intercession for them so that they would be on guard against disunity. We have seen Jesus speak about perfect or complete joy two other times during that night (John 15:11; 16:22). It was a declaration that the kingdom was arriving. This third time in one night emphasized the importance of those being in the world living in the fruit of the Spirit: joy. Jesus wants us to have a full measure of His joy.

The author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus had more joy than anyone (Hebrews 1:9). That does not mean He just went around smiling, though He probably smiled a lot. It means He had joy in His soul knowing He is loved by the Father, that the Father is pleased with Him, and that the will of His loving Father would prevail. He wants us to have a full measure of His joy. If you have those truths deep in your soul, that the Father loves you, is pleased with you, and will prevail in your life, you will begin to experience the same kind of joy, Jesus' joy. Jesus is contrasting the life of His followers with the people of the world. They will live in gloom and anxiety while we should be living in joy and peace. That assurance that Jesus intercedes for us, asking for our protection by the most powerful of names should fill our hearts with joy. We are loved. God will prevail. He will finish the work He began in us (Philippians 1:6)!

It seems strange that Jesus should keep bringing up joy this last night of His life, but He can see beyond the impending trial to the glorious victory that lay ahead by faith. We should do the same. In this world you will have trouble, but Jesus overcame! Do you know what glory awaits you? Look forward with eyes of faith and be joyful!

14 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.

14 Jesus faithfully passed on the Word of God to us. It is contrary to the spirit of this world. It exposes this world for its true motives. It challenges us to give our lives back to our Creator. Because the world's goal is selfishness, it hates those who proclaim the Word (John 15:19). If you doubt that because of how easy it is for us in America, consider that every year approximately 175,000 Christians are martyred. Jesus was not of

this world. He came from the Father. When we are in Him, we are no longer of this world. We become a target of the world's hatred.

¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

15,16 We are in the world but not of the world. We do not need to isolate ourselves in a monastery. It would not help if we did because the world is in our heart just as Egypt was in the heart of those in the Exodus. We need protection not only from disunity but from the evil one's schemes and the spirit of this age (Ephesians 6:11). That is our second great need. Jesus taught the disciples to pray for deliverance from the evil one (Matthew 6:13). Jesus was not praying that we escape physical harm, but rather that we escape Satan's schemes to destroy our witness. Jesus knows that Satan can bring down any human who does not have divine assistance. Satan knows our weaknesses and has had thousands of years of practice on people a lot stronger than you and me. Thank Jesus for His intercession for our protection from Satan's tactics (Jude 1:24). Amen?

Questions

Is it possible to reconcile freewill and predestination?

How is Jesus different from other prophets?

What is the first thing Jesus prayed for the disciples?

What does it mean to "protect them by the power of your name"?

Why was Judas doomed/lost?

How can you have a full measure of Jesus' joy?

How could Jesus emphasize joy on His last night?

What was the second thing Jesus prayed for the disciples?

Why did Jesus teach neither assimilation nor isolation?