

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to John 17

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through the Gospel of John

And for the past few weeks we have found ourselves in the section of John's Gospel

where we find the real Lord's Prayer

It is a prayer that Jesus prayed knowing that He was mere moments before He was betrayed, arrested and nailed to a Roman cross

We see Jesus pray for Himself, Jesus praying for His 11 disciples that He has been pouring into for the last few hours – knowing that He will soon depart them and that their world is going to be turned upside down. And He also prays for all believers (us).

And it is from Jesus' prayer that we learn how to pray

It is also through this prayer that -

We learn what was in His heart

We learn more about His character

We learn about His love

We learn About His concern for the flock

And we get insight into the intimacy that He has with the Father

In our text this morning – Jesus in His prayer is going to give us an amazing promise.

Let's pray...

Read text –

[Jhn 17:9-12 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.

I had you make a note of the word “them”

Again – as we read it in context we have to remember that Jesus is speaking here regarding these 11 guys that are by His side.

He is saying – I am praying right now for them

The “them” is these disciples

I am not praying for the world – as a whole.

I am praying right now exclusively for them

This particular prayer is a prayer for His disciples

Later on – in a few weeks – we will see that He prays for those that will believe later on (us)

Jesus is praying for the disciples because they are the ones that are going to be empowered by the Holy Spirit - to continue His work

These disciples – just like every believer today – were going to be the ones that were to bring the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those that God places in our lives

Turn with me to the Gospel of Matthew 5

[Mat 5:13-16 NKJV] 13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all [who are] in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

When God delivered the Children of Israel from Egypt, from the bondage of slavery –

He made a covenant with them – setting them apart as His own holy people

They were to be distinct from the other nations.

They were to act different, look different and be different.

They were to model a different way to live, defined by love for God and love of neighbor – btw, that was the 10 Commandments – this is how you are to love God, this is how you are to love your neighbor.

Here in Matt 5 – Jesus is teaching His disciples and us the exact same thing

We are to be different than the world –

We're to hear the words of Jesus and put them into practice

As followers of Jesus, this is our mission. This is our witness.

We are to imitate Jesus, such that when we hear His words and put them into practice, people will see our deeds and give glory to our Father in heaven.

This is why Jesus is praying for His disciples –

He is interceding on their behalf so that the Father will equip, empower and strengthen them so they will be the salt and the light in a fallen world.

And He does the same for you and me.

You see church, there is a common fallacy that we often hold to, thinking that if I am in the will of the Lord,

if I am obeying the commands of Jesus,

my life should be a piece of cake.

That I shouldn't have any problems, I shouldn't have any troubles.

That my voyage in life will be going from one calm sea to the next with a gentle wind at my back, because after all, I'm doing the will of the Lord.

Think about that for a moment –

Jesus submitted to the will of the Father – did He have the wind at His back, did He have calm seas ahead of Him – No, He had the cross.

The will of God is not an easy thing.

But Jesus is watching over us interceding and will come to our rescue when we have learned the lessons He wants to teach us.

[1Pe 5:10-11 NKJV] 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle [you]. 11 To Him [be] the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Notice in His prayer, Jesus didn't pray for the world— **I do not pray for the world**

Jesus is talking about this fallen world system that we live in – to this day

Now, this of course doesn't mean that we shouldn't pray for and reach out to the lost people of this fallen world system that they might be saved:

Jesus in the Gospel of Luke (19)

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

As believers, we have been saved from this world, we have been taken out of this world (this fallen world system) but we still live in this world.

We are in this world, but we are not of this world

And because of that, we have a great obligation and responsibility to pray.

Not only do we pray for each other – we also pray for those still in the world.

Paul in his letter to Timothy

Gave Timothy and the church instructions -

[1Ti 2:1 NKJV] 1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, [and] giving of thanks be made for all men,

All men = all men, believers + nonbelievers

Paul goes on to say for kings and all who are in authority

What Paul is telling Timothy and the church here is –

Timmy – let your church be known – not for their building or for their programs or for what outreaches they do –

Let the church be known for their prayers for all men

It is His desire that a men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

It is God's desire that lives are forever and eternally changed by coming in to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ

So we tell God about men – that is what prayer is

And then we tell men about the God we pray to.

That is why God has you and me where He has us

And we have a Savior today – at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us as we pray for all men.

So in this particular prayer – Jesus isn't praying for the world – because He knew that in just a few hours, He was going to die for the world

You and I and the rest of His followers – we pray for the world and He prays for us.

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

Earlier in His prayer – in verse 5, Jesus had spoken about the shared glory between God the Father and God the Son -

[Jhn 17:5 NKJV] 5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Here is verse 10 –

Jesus speaks of the shared role that He and Father have with those that are redeemed.

Because the Father and Son are One – if we belong to Jesus, we belong to the Father

And Jesus goes on to say that He is glorified in the life of the believer.

How?

Jesus is glorified in us—by our trusting in Him

By us believing in Him

Not just simply believing Him in our minds – but a belief that is accompanied by actions.

It is a belief in Jesus that leads to a life that begins to look like Jesus

Therefore, Jesus is glorified through the belief of His disciples.

[Heb 11:6 NKJV] 6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [Him], for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and [that] He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Now of course, we read that verse and we mistakenly assume that this verse applies to an unsaved person—

We assume that it applies to a nonbeliever - to someone who needs to put their faith in Jesus and be saved because only then can they ever hope to please God with their life.

But actually, Hebrews 11 deals with the faith of believers – not non-believers

It is the chapter of the champions of faith

So, this verse is telling us that the only way a believer can continue to please God (continue to bring Him glory) is by constantly trusting Him in every area of our lives—everyday of our lives!

God – the Creator of the Heavens and the earth has chosen us to give Him glory on this earth.

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.

Jesus knows that His time is near –

He knows that in a few hours, He is going to die, in a few days, He is going to raise from the dead and soon He will ascend into Heaven

But He also knows that the disciples are not going anywhere – at least – not just yet.

He knows that His disciples are going to be left behind, in the world –

So Jesus asks that the Father will keep them

And the first thing that Jesus asks for is that there may be unity among them –

We have to remember that the disciples were quite a diverse group of guys.

Several of them were simple fishermen.

One was a tax collector for the Roman government.

One was a political activist, a zealot, dedicated to the overthrow of the Roman government.

And we know from Luke's gospel that earlier in the evening – these 11 guys were arguing among each other who was going to be the greatest among them.

Jesus prayed that they would be one, and one after the pattern of the unity of God the Father and God the Son

In our study last week, I talked about how Jesus had "manifested" God's name to the disciples, by being a living example of what God was like, what His nature was.

And the more we understand what God is really like, the closer we're going to get to unity.

However, I want to focus on the word kept – because Jesus uses the word three times here in these two verses.

I had you make a note of, keep, kept and kept

And therefore, I want us to be encouraged this morning by the keeping power of God

The keeping power of God: that is a key part of the relationship between Jesus and His disciples

It is the same key part of the relationship between our own relationship and Jesus Christ

And that is that He keeps us and none are lost

It is very important to grasp

These disciples (and those who are true believers), we are a gift from the Father to the Son – Jesus said it there – You have given Me

We have been given to Jesus – which means that we belong to Him

He owns us

We are His prized possessions

We have been purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ

And it is a lasting permanent gift – where you and I are kept by Him

We are kept – and not thrown away when we make a mistake

We are kept and not just discarded when we step into sin

We are kept and not lost when we wander away and stray

In the book of Isaiah we are told that His people are precious in His sight

We are kept – not because of anything that we do – because we all tend to wander

James tells us - For we all stumble in many things. (3:2)

That is the testimony of our lives –

We may not stumble with the same things – but under the right circumstances / under the right temptation – we will stumble.

[1Jo 2:16 NKJV] 16 For all that [is] in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world.

So we should be encouraged that when we do stumble – we are kept by the power of God

We are not kept by our good works

We are not kept because we are a good little Christian

We are not kept because we haven't missed a Sunday at Calvary Santa Cruz

Or because we have prayed more or read our bible more this year than last year

We are kept by His power

Think about how encouraging this was for His disciples – in less than 12 hours as they scatter and abandon Jesus, as they see His tortured body nailed to a Roman cross –

Think about Peter who would deny Jesus –

Write this verse down – 1 Peter 1:3-5

Because Peter actually speaks on this topic.

[1Pe 1:3-5 NKJV] 3 Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

If we are born again – then we are kept by the power of God

The real question is – are we born again

Now, the bible does talk about those that stumble –

A great example of this is in the parable that Jesus gave about the prodigal son – (Luke 15) actually the parable should be titled the prodigal sons – because the father had problems with both of his sons.

And to take it a little further – the emphasis of the parable is actually on the love and grace of the Father

So we know that in the parable – that one of the sons takes his inheritance early – it was the equivalent of going up to dad and saying “I wish you were dead”

I want my money now – I can't wait until you die.

And the father being gracious – gives that son his inheritance

And he goes off and he blows his inheritance on prodigal living

Then there was famine in the land – times got tough

And instead of going home – he got a job raising pigs – which went against his Jewish convictions. Pigs were unclean. No righteous Jewish boy or girl would ever get close to pigs – yet, because of his compromise – we see that one compromise led to another and then to another

And as he was assessing his life – Jesus tells us in the parable that he was so hungry that he was willing to eat from the slop that they were feeding the pigs

But it was during this time – where he said, “I think I’ll go home – but I don’t think I can go home as a son – I hurt him too much - I think I will go home as one of his hired servants – they have it better than I have it – I will just go home and serve my dad”

I don’t deserve to be his son anymore

I will just go back and be one of his servants

And the young son goes home –

And Luke tells us that (Luke 15:20)

But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.

Here is the thing church we know that the parable continues on –

But of all the lessons that we learn from this parable – this one is the most important.

The son left home, did his own thing in great rebellion and difficulty

But one thing the son never stopped being – he never stopped being a son

And this is so true for the person who is truly born again

The person who is truly born again doesn't lose their sonship or daughter ship because of bad decisions

If we are saved, we are secured

We are secured – we are kept by the power of God

Someone might say – well wait a minute

What about the son of perdition? What about Judas???

By the way – son of perdition is literally translated as son of hell

Back in John 6

[Jhn 6:70 NKJV] 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

In His prayer – Jesus is making a contrast between those that are His (true believers)

If we are born again, we are secure in Christ

We have an imperishable new life

But – Judas was not a believer – he was a make believer

How do we know that Judas wasn't a true believer – because the devil entered him

Church, Judas did not lose his salvation because he didn't lose something that he
didn't have to begin with

He is someone who serves as an example of someone who pretended to have a
relationship with Jesus but finally was exposed as a fake and a fraud

Church,

Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith

The Alpha and the Omega – the A to the Z in our lives

Salvation starts with Him, salvation is only from Him, salvation is kept by Him and is
reserved in heaven for us - in the presence of Jesus Christ

Every single one of us, who is a true believer – is here today because we have been
kept by the power of God, through His love for us

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

The writer of Hebrews

[Heb 10:23 NKJV] 23 Let us hold fast the confession of [our] hope without wavering, for He who promised [is] faithful.

All of the promises in Scripture that relate to eternal life – are all unconditional, unilateral promises

In other words – they don't depend on our faithfulness to do anything

They only depend on the faithfulness of One Person – God Almighty

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



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