

WARM-UP

- What is one gift you were very grateful to receive? Why did it mean so much to you?
- When you are experiencing a challenge, who is the first person you think of calling? Why would you choose him or her?
- Share about when you were going through a difficult time and someone was there for you. What happened?

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

JOHN 17:8-9

In the book of John, chapter 17 is the prayer of Jesus for His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion. Knowing that His time with them on earth was ending soon, Jesus prayed for His disciples and sent them into the world. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, prays for us, His disciples, to be delivered from the evil one and sanctified as we carry out His mission for us. Let's look at this prayer today.

1 | Jesus prayed for His disciples to be kept from the evil one.

¹⁵"I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." **JOHN 17:15-16**

As Jesus' disciples, we will experience hardship, persecution, and even bodily death while we live on this earth. However, Jesus prays that God will protect our hearts and minds through His love and presence in every situation we encounter. What challenges did the apostle Paul and other believers encounter in 2 Corinthians 1:8-10? How did they overcome the affliction?

2 | Jesus prayed for His disciples to be sanctified by the word.

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” JOHN 17:17

The second part of Jesus' prayer is that we would be sanctified by the word of God. As we abide in the word of God, we can continuously experience salvation from the power of sin. Through the sanctifying and transforming power of God's word, we become more like Jesus every day we live. Why do you think this was one of the last prayers of Jesus before His arrest (John 18)?

After praying for His disciples to be kept from the evil one and to be sanctified by the word, Jesus said to the Father: *“As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world”* (John 17:18). It was no longer a prayer; it was a statement of fact. Jesus' followers are to go into the world and proclaim His truth wherever we go. While this mandate is daunting, it comes with an assurance of God's protection and power, as revealed in Jesus' prayers for us. God gives us everything we need to obey and proclaim Him to the world.

APPLICATION

- How do you imagine Jesus feeling and looking as He prayed for His disciples? What is your response to His prayer?
- The essence of Christlikeness is a growing and deepening relationship with God. What is something you can do to abide deeper in His word today?
- While we are no longer of the world, we are still in the world and sent into the world by Jesus. What does that mean for you?

