

Jesus' High Priestly Prayer

John 17 begins with *"When Jesus had spoken these words..."*. This prayer comes at the end of the farewell discourse at the passover meal with his disciples that begins in John 13.

Have you ever read John 13-16 in one sitting? Read is several times this week as we prepare to walk through Jesus' prayer together.

John 17 - week 1: One theme, 3 questions.

Though preparing Himself to face the cruelest form of torture devised at the time his disciples were on His heart...and everyone who would ever be redeemed. That includes us. What did he pray for them and us? Lots of stuff, but a major petition:

Theme: Jesus prays that you and I will be in the world as he was in the world. Read John 17:14-21

18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

Questions:

- 1) What does it look like for Jesus to be in the world?
- 2) What does He pray for us as we are in the world?
- 3) How did Jesus being in the world save us?

1) WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE FOR JESUS TO BE IN THE WORLD?

Lk. 19 - Zaccheus approaches the local chief tax collector. Leader of organized crime and represented everything gentile. *And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."* All over the Gospel accounts of Jesus life we see that Jesus delegated in spending His time with scoundrels. "In the world" for Jesus means **meaningful** time with sinners...

As He was preparing Himself and His disciples for His death on the cross, Jesus prays that you and I, our families, would be in the world as He was. We invite those Jesus came to save into our homes in such a way that we get welcomed into theirs. Showing others (including our kids) what it means to follow Jesus.

The response that Jesus got from those around Him was generally the same...he was greatly criticized for it. The religious and the "whole crowd" in Lk. 19. They hated Zacheus and couldn't stand that this is who Jesus would choose to spend His time with instead of THEM.

How does Jesus respond to the criticism?

Matthew 9 *As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. 10 And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."*

The Pharisees had defined their devotion / purity / holiness by separation...we tend to do the same thing...keep ourselves away from what we think would defile us or lead us astray...

Jesus says go learn what this means...you don't define for Jesus what purity is, you listen to His Word...Holiness co-exists with mercy...mercy to sinners... Jesus prays that we as His people would be given to a life of mercy...to broken lives, those trapped in unbelief and sin...

He prays that we would be in the world showing mercy to sinners like ourselves...every moment of every day if you are a Christian, Jesus is being merciful to you and not treating you as you deserve, but instead being patient and merciful. Jesus wasn't merciful to you, in spite of your sin, but b/c you are a sinner. He intends for us to be His Ambassadors in this world b/c people are sinners.

How "in the world" are we? Does our life reflect Jesus' priorities?

Do we spend more energy, prayer, and gospel talk on the righteous or sinners?

Why do you tend to focus on the righteous?

Is our time spent with not-yet-believers MEANINGFUL? (or just obligatory?)

What would living sent into the world as Jesus was in the world look like for you?

How would your prayers, schedule, emotions, and interests change?

2) WHAT DOES HE PRAY FOR US AS WE ARE IN THE WORLD?

He prays that in the world God will protect us... *John 17:15 keep them from the evil one.*

He wants us in the world...it's safer for us in the world where Jesus wants us than to be hanging in the holy huddle. There is where Jesus wants us and he's praying for our protection therefore, we are safest among the world, where Jesus wants us to be...safer to obey Jesus and trust Him.

He prays that we'll be Sanctified by His Word *John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.* Sanctification does not depend on our surroundings or our friends. It comes from the word of truth. Treasuring and surrendering to His word means we will grow in holiness. And it we be full of mercy because we are bringing the word of truth, the gospel, to others. Jesus is praying for your transformation as we seek to delight in God's word "in the world".

Recently how intentional has your shared life with not-yet-believers been?

Is there a passion for holiness as we serve Him in the world as Ambassadors?

What steps can you take to add gospel intentionality here?

He prays for our unity: *John 17:[20] "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, [21] that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

He longs for unity in the church on the basis of being Christ. (not in common interests or culture)...but this unity as Ray said last week is not predicated on our efforts...but on Jesus. Why? So that the world will see evidence of grace. And know that Jesus is the savior of the world.

He prays for our glory:

Sharing in His glory is the goal of redemption: restoration to original glory and enjoying it forever. Jesus is taking names to the cross with Him. He is praying for them here.

How much do we want our not-yet-believing friends to enjoy the glory of God? Take a moment to imagine your neighbor, co-worker, friend to be sharing the glory of God with you. Does this move you?

What ways are your life and speech commending this future glory to them? (discover some encouraging examples)

What have you said or done recently that has NOT commended it to them? (ie. you have commended life in this world instead)

Have everyone take time to talk about 5 to 10 not-yet-believers that they are spending (or want to spend) meaningful time with. Pray briefly after each person as time allows. Think moms on playground, neighbors, parents of teammates, co-workers, etc)

3) How did Jesus being in the world save us? John 17:1 *"Father, THE hour has come."*

What is the culmination of Jesus' redemptive life? THE hour...

- The hour has come when He who knew no sin would be made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- It was the hour to fulfill all the great prophecies.
- It was the hour when the serpent's head would finally be bruised.
- It was the hour when the greater son of David, son of Solomon, the Messiah would come to glory...
- It was the hour...when all of the symbols of sacrifice were finally fulfilled. When the true Lamb of God was slain for the sins of the world.
- It was the hour every prophet spoke of and every man longed for. It was the hour of triumph over the prince of this world, the kingdom of darkness.
- It is the moment when God, through Christ, will blot out the curse, reconcile sinners to Himself, and it would all be accomplished on a cross...as the King of Glory was nailed to wood and made sin for His beloved people to bear the wrath of those who hate God.
- It was the hour for which Jesus came. John 12:13, 27 *"Now My soul has become troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour?' But for this purpose, I came to this hour. 'Father, glorify Thy name.'"*