

We come today to the second part of Jesus' prayer. **The prayer is** easily divided into three sections with the prayer focussed on Jesus and the Father; the disciples; future believers.

In this section Jesus identifies the disciples as having been given by God and sheds some light on **why he is** praying for them:

1. **Because they now** know the Father whom Jesus has revealed to them (6a). The word 'revealed' literally means 'to render apparent'.
2. **Because they have** accepted and obeyed God's word (6b-8a). They knew that they had failed many times but Jesus focuses on their faithfulness: "They have obeyed your word...I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them." This makes me smile a bit because the disciples were pretty dull most of the time and yet Jesus is gracious with how He describes them. He could have pointed out all their failures but instead celebrates their successes. Isn't it good to know that when Jesus looks at us he would rather celebrate our successes than castigate us for our failures. We still have to seek forgiveness for those failures, our lack of faith etc but Jesus would rather remind us of the steps of faith we take.
3. **Because they believed** that Jesus was sent by the Father (8b). We see this in the last part of verse 8: "*They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.*" Though the disciples doubted and wavered and even bailed on Jesus when things got rough, Peter spoke for them in **John 6:69**: *We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.*
4. **Because they bring** glory to Jesus (10). That's an amazing thought, isn't it? This phrase at the end of verse 10: "*And glory has come to me through them*" can be translated, "I stand glorified in them." That leads me to ask a question: Does glory come to Jesus through me?

That's why he prays, but what does he pray?

First, he prays for their **protection**: v11 *Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name*, and , v15 *My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.*

Take a look at how Jesus addresses His request: “Holy Father.” This captures both God’s transcendence and His tenderness. It balances the idea of ultimate purity with intimate paternity. He is mighty and majestic and He is also my daddy. I must have a proper sense of fear and yet He is dear to me. I commend this model to you because this title reminds us to be both reverent and still confident in our requests.

Jesus has kept his followers safe and secure and now that He is returning to His glory in heaven He is handing them back to the Father for safekeeping. Jesus knew that with His departure Satan would shift His sinister schemes to the disciples. God’s name represents His nature and so Jesus knows with confidence that they will be protected.

Verse 12 *While I was with them, I guarded them. I kept them safe through the name you gave me. None of them has been lost, except the one who was headed for ruin. It happened so that Scripture would come true.*

The Scripture He is referring to here is likely **Psalm 41:9** *Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.*

But we need to realise that this doesn’t mean that we will be protected against any harm. It means that you can have hope for eternity but it also about keeping us from testing 1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.* We still go through things though because James 1:2-3 *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.*

Secondly, Jesus prays for their sanctification. To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer. A pen is "sanctified" when used to write. Eyeglasses are "sanctified" when used to improve sight. In the theological sense,

things are sanctified when they are used for the purpose God intends. A human being is sanctified, therefore, when he or she lives according to God's design and purpose. If there's ever been a churchy-sounding word, sanctify certainly is. To be sanctified means "to be set apart or dedicated" and speaks of allegiance and consecration for the purposes of sacrifice. In this sense, Jesus is set apart as a priest, preparing to offer up a sacrifice, which is His own body as stated in Hebrews 10:10: "*And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*" Through the sacrifice of His body we are sanctified.

Sanctification happens through the Word. The only way to live set apart is to constantly immerse yourself in the Scriptures. Reading and studying the Bible is not optional. As someone has said, "*Sin will keep you from this book and this book will keep you from sin.*" Psalm 119:11: "*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*" Jesus' heart is to set us apart!

When we believe that God's word is truth, and accept its truth for ourselves, we are introduced to Jesus and we are made holy through faith in Christ. This is very closely linked to vs 14 *I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.* 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that Satan is "the god of this age" and 1 John 5:19 adds that "...the whole world is under the control of the evil one." 1 John 2:16 declares that the things of the world are diametrically opposed to God: "*For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world.*"

The word "world" occurs 40 times in chapters 13-17 and in this chapter alone, it's used 18 times and refers to the ethical and moral system that stands in rebellion to God. Unfortunately, many Christians try to get as close to the world as they can. This is dangerous as James 4:4 states: "*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.*"

So, Jesus does not pray that we would escape from the world, or be immune from its hatred – in fact hatred is inevitable because we cannot conform to the world's standards. Jesus prays that they may be so dedicated to their task, and so sanctified by truth, that they may be able to fulfil their vocation as disciples as completely as he fulfilled his vocation. Jesus came into the world to reconcile humanity with God; we are sent to proclaim the good news of reconciliation, and to reflect divine love in our personal conduct.

We're supposed to be different – in the world, but not of it!

Lastly, Jesus prays that they would have joy. Vs 13 *I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.*

Joy is evident in the gospels before the birth of Jesus - Luke 1: Zechariah; Elizabeth; Mary

Joy surrounding Jesus' birth: Mary's rejoicing is shared by the shepherds; the wise men were overwhelmed by joy.

The ministry of Jesus is marked by joyfulness – lots of eating and drinking and parables about feasting but he is clear that the joy that comes from God is more important. Luke 10 the 70 return with joy because the demons submitted to them in Jesus name, but Jesus says they should rejoice in their redeemed status instead.

Crowds rejoice at the works of Jesus; Zacchaeus rejoices when Jesus comes for tea; Palm Sunday is a day of great joy.

Later, this joy takes on a theological significance when it is related to the life of the church. Joy is one of the marks of authentic church in Acts. The basis for that rejoicing is the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Through Acts we see occasions for joy:

Communion (2:46)

Miracles performed in Jesus' name (8:8)

The gift of the Spirit (13:52)

The conversion of Gentiles (15:3) and The Philippian jailer and his family (16:34)

But joy also comes through suffering and sorrow. Colossians 1:24 *I am glad that I can suffer for you. I am pleased also that in my own body I can continue the suffering of Christ for his body, the church.*

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 *Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; ⁵ in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; ⁶ in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸ through glory and dishonour, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.*

The paradox of Christian faith is that sorrow may be transformed into joy by Holy Spirit.

But joy is not static – you don't just get joy and that's it! In fact, looking round some churches it appears that some people don't have any joy. Paul encourages believers to a daily practice of rejoicing in the knowledge of Christ and his salvation. Philippians 3:1 *Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord!*

Philippians 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: rejoice!*

1 Peter 1:6-9 *In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith – of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire – may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. ⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

If we want to experience the 'full measure' of joy Jesus offers we need to give thanks for him; spend time with him, thanking him for his protection; and, put faith into practice so we can be salt and light in the world, bringing transformation and renewal in Jesus' name.