

John 17 – The Greatest Prayer. (11) Christ Jesus glorified in his Apostles. (refs for Bible study 5/4/18).

If you were allowed to pray for just two things for someone, what would you pray? Jesus is not restricted of course, but as he prays for the Apostles he chooses to pray: *'keep them'* v11b-15, and *'sanctify them'* v16-19.

**Sanctified by God's Word:** There is a separation between the world and Christ's people, v14-16. On the inside: new birth, the Spirit within. On the outside: new goals, desires, lifestyle. He prays *'keep them'* because it's a hostile, dangerous world. He prays *'sanctify them'* because the distinction between them and the world must be maintained.

- **What does it mean?** *'Holy Father'* v10 [hagios], *'sanctify'* v17, v19x2 [hagiazō]. God is holy so his people are to be holy, 1Pet.1v15-16. Meaning: to dedicate, separate, set apart. 'Sanctuary' – a place set apart. Bible meaning: **to be set apart for God**, separate, pure, clean, e.g. prophet Jer.1v5, priest Ex.28v41. Here Jesus prays that his Apostles would be set apart for God, devoted to him, doing what God wants. That's his prayer for us too.
- **Who does it?** He prays because it's God's work. Holiness springs from God for he alone is holy. Sanctification sometimes refers to something that's already happened, 1Cor.6v11, God alone does this. But we are more familiar with sanctification as a process, the work of becoming more holy. This is something that God does in us, yet something in which we also work, Heb.10v16, Phil.2v13-14. It is **God's work, yet we work too.**
- **How is it achieved?** The vital factor: God's Word, v17. Jesus is God's Word in flesh, 1v14, 14v6. The Father revealed himself to them through Christ. The Spirit was specifically promised too 16v13. The Word endures for us in written form, 1Pet.1v25. No-one can be sanctified without God's Word. **God's Word provides motivation:** his glory, love, promises, warnings. **Method:** commands, exhortations, examples to follow and avoid. **Model:** Jesus models it perfectly. Saturate yourself in the Word! Study him, look at him, listen to him! All profitable, 2Tim.3v16.
- **Why is it so important?** Because they are **sent on a mission**, v18. They must be fit to carry out that mission. Jesus draws parallel: 'I am sent, so they are sent. I have a mission, so they have a mission.' We too have a mission, to go, tell, etc. Are we fit to carry out that mission? Will they see and hear something of Jesus in us? Jesus' own sanctification vital to theirs v19. He 'sanctified himself' by his life, death & resurrection, see v1-5. The whole basis of our sanctification is his work on the cross. Without that it would not be possible. Christ was glorified in the lives of men whom he chose & transformed. He is glorified in us as we are sanctified by his Word.