

A. John 17:6-8 – The Lord prayed about His disciples

1. John 17:6a – “*I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world...*” From among the masses of humanity, God had **chosen** some men for Jesus to train. Jesus revealed the Father’s person, His real self, to them. He showed them exactly what God is like in reputation and character.
2. John 17:6b – “*...they were Yours and You gave them to Me...*” In Jesus’ prayer, He reminded God that the disciples had first belonged to Him, but He had personally **given** them to Jesus. Jesus was supposed to faithfully train and look after them, which He did.
3. John 17:6c – “*...and they have kept Your word.*” The disciples listened to Jesus’ commendation of them: Jesus told the Father that they had **faithfully**, taken in and treasured up all they could understand of God’s message, His word.
 - a. This may seem like an exaggeration since we know the disciples’ failures and limitations, but Jesus **saw** their hearts. He knew very well where they’d come from spiritually three years earlier and where they were now. John 14:9-10
 - b. Even though God knows who we are in real time, He sees our ultimate **progress** better than anyone. In Romans 14:4 Paul said, “*Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.*” 1 Corinthians 4:5, Jude 1:24-25
4. John 17:7 – “*Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You .*” In His prayer, Jesus mentioned that the disciples had seen the extraordinary **example** of how He daily lived. Instead of living each day by His own divine strength and authority, Jesus chose to live His life in dependence on the Father’s enabling power, as should we.
 - a. Jesus could have lived His life by His own wisdom and power, but instead, He willingly **chose** to rely on the Father. Jesus set aside His divine right to independence. He worked miracles only when directed by the Father to do so. John 7:17-18, 28; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10
 - b. That very evening, Jesus had commanded His disciples *to abide in Him*. He was asking them to live the same **way** He had lived every day of His life here on earth.
5. John 17:8a – “*... for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them...*” Jesus assured the Father that the disciples had indeed received all that the Father wanted them to learn through Him. Jesus did not mean they could recall every detail, but rather that they now **embraced** and cherished His word in their hearts.
6. John 17:8b – “*...and [they] truly understood that I came forth from You...*” Jesus said there was now no doubt in the minds of His disciples that He was the promised Messiah. They were fully persuaded that Jesus represented God. Most of them **died** for that belief.
7. John 17:8c – “*...and they believed that You sent Me.*” Not only had they received God’s message through Jesus, but they were now also **convinced** that He was sent directly from God’s glorious presence. The coming of Jesus to earth was coordinated and commissioned by the Father. John 3:34; 6:63, 68; 14:10

B. John 17:9-19 – The Lord prayed for His disciples

1. John 17:9 – “*I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours ...*” At that time, Jesus did not plead for the world. He had only His **disciples** in mind as He begged, “My followers belong to you, Father, so I lift them up to you.”
2. John 17:10a – “*...and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine...*” As Jesus continued His thought from the previous verse, He affirmed His **co-equality** with the Father; Jesus co-owns all that the Father owns.
3. John 17:10b – “*...and I have been glorified in them.*” Jesus’ followers, who also belonged to the Father, had honored Him while He was on earth. He was **jealous** for them and earnestly guarded their backs in prayer.
4. John 17:11a – “*I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You...*” This was a forward-looking statement. Jesus was still present in the world. But being so near to finishing the work the Father sent Him to do, He prayed for them as if His work were already done. Very soon He’d shout, “It is finished!” But the disciples **stayed**.
5. John 17:11b – “*Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me...*” Jesus was going to return to heaven to be with His Father, but the route He would take was through the sufferings of the cross and the separation of the grave. He asked God, His Holy Father (and theirs), to **care** for the disciples in His absence.

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- a. Jesus, as a son, had been given His Father's holy name, and with it, total authority. He implored God to now protect His disciples by the **power** of His name. Matthew 28:18
- b. God the Father would need to guard the disciples in Christ's **absence** since He was going to the cross and into death itself. Jesus implored the Father to keep the disciples safe by the power of the name that He have given Christ. Isaiah 52:13-15, 57:15; Jeremiah 23:5; Philippians 2:9-11
6. John 17:11c – "...*that they may be one even as We are.*" The Father and the Son share the same name. Jesus wanted the disciples to be completely unified, just like the Father and the Son. In this prayer Jesus prayed for them to have **singularity** of purpose.
7. John 17:12 – "*While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.*" Jesus protected His own while He was with them. Not **one** of them perished, except Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition. Judas had never believed.
8. John 17:13 – "*But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.*" Because Jesus was about to depart to the Father, He prayed preemptively for the disciples' spiritual well-being. He wanted His joy to become their joy. Jesus prayed in **hope**, and we know now that God answered His prayer.
9. John 17:14 – "*I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" Believers who embrace God's word find themselves at **odds** with the world. In John 16 Jesus had warned His disciples of the world's hatred, so now He prayed for protection and help in their trials. 1 John 2:15-16
10. John 17:15 – "*I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.*" Jesus did not ask for the disciples to be taken out of the world but to be protected from the evil one (Satan) while they were still here. God leaves His children here so they can **appear as lights** in the world. Philippians 2:15
 - a. God fulfills this petition every day by thoroughly maintaining our salvation both safe and secure just as He promised in His word. Hebrews 13:5b lovingly states, "*for He Himself has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.'*" 1 John 5:13
 - b. God also daily protects us in a myriad of practical ways. He constantly delivers us from Satan's vicious attacks and the fatal attractions of the **world**. Ephesians 6:16, 1 John 2:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:3
 - c. As we **walk** in the light, we expose the world's darkness because of their sin and unbelief. This makes them angry and upset because they think we are somehow judging them. We are not judging them, but the light of God's word can be very convicting. 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 5:8, Matthew 5:16, John 3:19-20
11. John 17:16 – "*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*" In English the word order of John 17:14 is the same as here in verse 16: *they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* However, in Greek there is a subtle **change** in word order. This change emphasizes two distinct, yet important, truths.
 - a. John 17:14b could be paraphrased, "The world does not supply them with life even as I do not draw My life from this world." Jesus focused on the fact that as with Him, the disciples' spiritual lives did not **originate** from the world, but from God. John 1:13, 3:7
 - b. John 17:16 could be paraphrased, "They are not to live by the world, as their life source, just as I do not live by this world." Here, Jesus focused on the fact that the world could add nothing of **value** to the disciples' spiritual lives.
 - c. While Jesus lived on earth, He did not tap into **human** effort-based living. The disciples' resources for living a victorious life would not come from a worldly source. Galatians 3:3; Colossians 2:8-10; Philippians 3:3, 9
12. John 17:17 – Jesus had yet another important prayer request for the Father. He prayed for the spiritual **growth** of His followers. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the apostle Paul prayed a similar prayer when he prayed that God would sanctify the believers *entirely*. In 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, he asserted that God is the one who *establishes* us. Philippians 1:6
 - a. John 17:17a – "*Sanctify them in the truth...*" Jesus prayed because He was aware that simply learning Bible **doctrine** or memorizing scripture does not produce sanctification, and yet He also knew that a person cannot be sanctified apart from God's word. Ephesians 5:26, 2 Timothy 3:15
 - 1) God's word sanctifies us by teaching us about **God**. Psalm 89:5-18, 2 Peter 1:16-21, 3:18, 1 John 1:1-3
 - 2) God's word sanctifies us by teaching us everything we need to know for **life** and for holiness. 2 Peter 1:2-4
 - 3) God's word sanctifies us by making us a **blessing** and encouragement to the body of Christ. Colossians 3:16

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- 4) God's word sanctifies us by encouraging us when we are down hearted, by making us **wise**, by enlightening us, and by causing us to rejoice. Psalm 19:7-11
 - 5) God's word sanctifies us by causing us to bear **fruit**. Psalm 1:2-3
 - 6) God's word sanctifies us by **equipping** us to serve the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13, 2 Timothy 3:16
 - 7) God's word sanctifies us by **correcting** us where we are wrong and training us in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - 8) God's word sanctifies us by filling us with the knowledge of God's good and perfect will and **purpose** so that we are able to *walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work* (Col. 1:9-11). Romans 12:1-2
 - 9) God's word sanctifies us by protecting us against the devil's **attacks**. Through knowledge of the truth we can firmly stand our ground, without being shaken by the fiery darts Satan sends our way. And with God's word as our sword, we are fully equipped for battle. Ephesians 6:10-17, 1 Peter 5:8-9
 - 10) God's word sanctifies us by giving us **hope**. Romans 15:4
- b. John 17:17b – “*Your word is **truth**.*” In an ever-changing world, we can stand securely and confidently on God's word. All scripture is God-breathed. It is all God's word, and He cannot lie. God's word is perfect, right and pure. It can be fully depended upon. Psalm 12:6; 18:30; 19:8-9; 119:138, 160; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Titus 1:2
13. John 17:18 – “*As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world .*” This was also part of His prayer for the disciples. Just as the Father sent the Son into the world, with all authority, Jesus likewise sent His disciples with full **authority**.
- a. Seated at the right hand of God the Father, *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named* (Eph. 1:20-21), Jesus' authority **supersedes** all other. Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 28:18-20, Colossians 2:10, Hebrews 1:2, 1 Peter 3:22
 - b. Jesus sends us out with the same authority He sent out His disciples. We have been commissioned by the highest authority there is; the one who promised He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail. We are on the **offensive**; we are the winners. Matthew 16:18
14. John 17:19 – “*For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth .*” Jesus, our great example, sanctified Himself, setting Himself apart for God's plans and purpose, just as we should do. We know the truth from God's word. The truth is meant to set us **apart** as holy unto the Lord.