



3/11/26

*Do you ever get caught in thinking that your feelings have more truth than God's word? I know we would say that we don't believe that if we were quizzed for a class. But the truth is, sometimes I give way more validity to my feelings than God's word. I praise God that He is so patient and merciful with us that He doesn't give up on us. He gently works with us to help us lay our feelings at the altar of our faith so that we can embrace the truth and never let it go. In John 8:32 Jesus said, "You will know the TRUTH and the TRUTH will set you free." O Lord, let us be set free by Your truth and not held captive by our feelings!*

*Blessings,  
Jonna*

*John 17:9-19*

*"God so loved the WORLD that He gave His only begotten, unique, one-of-a-kind Son..." God LOVES the world. Jesus LOVES the world. But here, in John 17, Jesus wasn't praying for the world as a whole. He was praying specifically for those who would have the closest, most intimate relationship with Him... those who would confess Him as Lord. The most beautiful thing about God, or I should say, ONE of the most beautiful things about God... there are so many beautiful things... is that God pursues relationship with His people, with those who love Him back.*

*Today, I get to eavesdrop on Jesus as He continued His prayer to the Father. I'm struck once again that He was not praying for Himself! He wasn't wallowing in self pity. Even in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He was facing the cup of wrath that was about to be poured out on Him, He said, "Not My will, but Yours be done."*

*Part II: John 17:9-19*

*In vs. 9-10 Jesus said to the Father, "I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them." Jesus was specifically praying for those who belong to Him,*

*who confess Him as Lord. The Father gave them to Him because they all belonged to the Father first. This is a big deal. First, it is so common to have a problem with the Father because of fathers who failed to love their children as they should. But I need to see here that Jesus came because the Father sent Him, and if the Father had not allowed our confession of Jesus as Lord to mean anything, even His death and resurrection would not have saved us. Jesus came to make the FATHER known. Also, it is the Father's purpose and His Son's purpose to give us LIFE! No one would have any hope without Him.*

*There is such a oneness between the Father and the Son, and mutual relationship that God wants His people also to enjoy in Him. Jesus came to do the will of the Father, and the Father glorified Jesus IN us. He honored Jesus through the relationship we get to have in Him. This is so beautiful! I love the fact that God the Father models mutual relationship with the Son, and He wants to have MUTUAL relationship with me. Yes, I see that my purpose is to glorify Him and worship Him, but not in fear and not in hope of earning His favor. I glorify and worship Him because I HAVE His favor, because I am already loved by Him.*

*I see this in vs. 11 when Jesus said, "And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as we are one." Jesus knew He would be leaving soon... and He knew that the disciples weren't going to understand at first. Even when He ascended to heaven, Matthew says that "some doubted." I'm sure I would have been one of them. "Lord, I've seen You die and rise again, but now You're leaving and You're telling me to wait. Is this all over? Will the Holy Spirit really show up?"*

*Because Jesus understood our weakness of faith, He prayed for the Father to "keep them in Your name." While Jesus was with the disciples, He kept them in the Father's name, which the Father had given to Jesus. That was a lot of work! The disciples were just like me... selfish, wanting to be the best, not very compassionate at times. Jesus knew His people would need help to stay devoted to the Lord, because even those who love God tend to drift from Him. He is so MERCIFUL!!!*

*What happens when we're "kept in His name"? Unity. This is the evidence of our relationship with God... we care for each other because we're secure in His love. We don't have to fight for position or recognition. We are free to love and pursue unity as Jesus has done with us.*

*Vs. 12 says, "While I was with them, I kept them in Your name, which You have given Me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." This blows my mind. Jesus knew the whole time that Judas was going to betray Him. His betrayal had been prophesied in Psalm 41:9, and Jesus quoted this verse at the last supper. It says, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me." Whoa! It was right after they broke bread together that Judas left to get the soldiers who would arrest Jesus. Zechariah 11:12-13 prophesied that Judas would betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, that Judas would try to give the money back, and that the priests would use the money to buy the potter's field... a gravesite. And that's exactly*

*what happened.*

*Jesus knew the whole time the prophesied "son of destruction" was Judas. And He still loved Judas. On the night Judas betrayed Him, Jesus washed his feet. That is mind blowing. Jesus treated him with the same love and care that He showed all the disciples. It's also mind blowing to me that Judas could be in the presence of the King of kings for 3 years and still be so blind.*

*In vs. 13, Jesus said to the Father, "But now I am coming to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves." Jesus was speaking these things, this prayer, because He knew what was coming. He knew this would be devastating to the disciples. He knew they loved Him, even as He knew they were going to scatter from Him in just a few short hours. He knew He would be going home to the Father. So He spoke these words so that they could have His JOY. God wants to fill His people with His JOY... and this is a joy that is not dependent on any circumstance. He PRAYED this for us. Everything Jesus prayed aligns with His word because He IS the word. So I can have confidence that He WILL fulfill His joy in me. It's not something I have to strive for. I just need to learn to abide in Him and then the joy comes.*

*In vs. 14-16, Jesus made it clear that anyone who confesses Him as Lord does not belong to this world. We are IN the world, but we are not OF the world. So He prayed, "I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world." I should not be surprised when the world thinks I'm nuts for following Jesus. Those who are hostile to God will be hostile to me. I love the song, Hated, by Zach Williams. He sings, "Being loved by the world is overrated. I think I'd rather be hated for lovin' You."*

*Jesus said twice in these 3 verses that His followers are not of the world, just as He is not of the world. So... what did He pray for us in that? He prayed that God the Father would not take us out of the world, but that He would keep us from the evil one... the prince of darkness... the liar... Satan himself. So... God has a purpose for me while I'm still on this earth, being in the world but not of the world. His purpose is for me to point people to Jesus so that as many as possible will not be blinded by the liar, but will have their eyes opened to see the hope of the gospel.*

*But wait! Every single apostle of Jesus was persecuted for his faith. All but one was executed. How is that keeping us from the evil one? The truth is, he can't touch my SOUL! He can't take away my salvation. Even his persecution of believers in Jesus acts as a servant of God because their death ushers them into the presence of God. So I can say with Paul, "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies" (2 Corinthians 4:8-10). O Lord, let me think like that!!! Let me also say with Paul, "If I am to remain in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me." Holy Father, please help me to remember that there is no power that*

*can prevail against YOU. And You are my ever present help in trouble.*

*How do I think like that? How do I live so that the trials of this world don't take my faith? Jesus prayed for that as well. In vs. 17-19, He said, "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."*

*Sanctify them in the truth... set them apart, make them holy, consecrate them... in the truth. Set them apart by the FACTS. I will not be sanctified by my feelings. My feelings are not necessarily true. They are a moving target. But God's word is TRUTH. It is not a moving target. It's consistent. It sanctifies me as I allow the Lord to do His work in me. Also, I see here that Jesus didn't say, "Let them sanctify THEMSELVES in the truth." God is the one who sanctifies me. My job, as Jesus explained very clearly in John 15, is to abide in Him. He produces the fruit in me. I bear the fruit as I continue to abide in Him.*

*God sent His Son, and His Son sends me. He has a purpose for me. This would be overwhelming to me if He expected me to figure it all out on my own. But Jesus said that He consecrated Himself for our sakes. He set Himself apart for us. How did He do that? He died on the cross and rose again. That was for my sake. Jesus didn't need to die for Himself. He was already righteous, already glorified, already perfect. He consecrated Himself because I need His righteousness. I needed His glory. I needed His perfection. He did that for me!!! Why? So that I could be set apart, sanctified, consecrated according to His truth.*

*How do I respond to this? What can I do in gratitude because of Jesus' prayer? Recognize and celebrate that I'm not of the world, just in it. My home is waiting for me in heaven. Cooperate with the Lord as He guards me and fills me with His joy. Cooperate with Him as He sanctifies me, and celebrate that He IS sanctifying me. Worship Him for consecrating Himself for me, for protecting me, for teaching me His word. O Lord, I desperately want to cooperate with You... to work out my salvation with fear and trembling because You are working IN me. I love You. I'm so thankful for Your patient endurance with me as You continue to set me apart for Your glory.*