

## John 17:11-16

*Jesus here prays for his disciples, because he is going to the cross, the grave and the resurrection. That leaves them in the world, physically alone and vulnerable. Jesus has protected them from the ravages of the world, and kept them loyal to the Father while he was here. What bad things will happen to and among them when he is gone, unless his prayer for them in the meantime is answered in the affirmative?*

Here's where we're going  
today

Quick flight, bird's-eye view of John 17			
The 3 Great Words in John 17		The 4 Great Doctrines in John 17	
Glory	vv1-5	Salvation	vv1-5
Kept	vv6-19	Preservation	vv11-16
One	vv20-26	Sanctification	vv17-19
		Glorification	vv20-26

v11, Every good parent is concerned in a positive and a negative way for their young adult children. As they move into independence, the parents have hopes and affirmations and dreams for them, for sure. They want their grown children to walk honorably and to grow emotionally, spiritually and practically, and be successful and productive adults, and satisfied with the results. And if truth be known, they're worried for them too. The world is not always kind. It is often brutally unkind. In this case, because of who Jesus is and what he taught, and because of what he is about to do, the world will be particularly unkind to the disciples left behind. And there will be spiritual forces behind the world, driving home the hooks and spikes. It wants to shut them down, to silence their voices and chill and discourage their faith in God. It wants, above all, for Jesus and his testimony and work to come to nothing.

Jesus here prays fervently to his **Holy Father** for their future spiritual security and their doctrinal and practical loyalty to the Father. The term Holy Father is used only here in Scripture, and by it Jesus reminds us of two key aspects of the divine nature:

**Ultimate purity**, balanced in **intimate paternity**. This will prepare the disciples for what lies ahead in the coming weeks, months and years of their ministry: the need for loving sanctification.

*May they be one even as we are* – The one-ness, the unity Jesus prays for among the disciples is family unity. It is a union of love and truth. This is what identifies us as well to the world, as God's unique family.

V12, Jesus had kept these disciples loyal to God, and had protected ("guarded") them from external attacks while He was with them. All except Judas Iscariot, who was the prophesied traitor that the Old Testament had predicted would betray the Messiah (Ps. 41:9; 69:25; 109:6-8; cf. John 13:18). His defection did not prove Jesus a failure, but proved Scripture trustworthy. Jesus did not include Judas in His requests for the Eleven.

V13, Jesus was about to leave them and return to the Father ("now I come to You").

Therefore He gave these teachings and offered these petitions ("these things I speak in the world")—so that they might share the fullness of His "joy" after He had departed (cf. 15:11; 16:22, 24).

*AW Pink. "It is blessed to mark how solicitous the Saviour was over the happiness of His people. ... A miserable Christian is therefore a self-contradiction. A joyless Christian is one who is out of communion with the Father: other objects have engaged his heart, and in consequence he walks not in the light of His countenance. What is the remedy? To confess our sins to God; to put away everything which hinders our communion with Him; to make regular use of the means which He has graciously provided for the maintenance of our joy—the word, prayer, meditation, the daily occupation of the heart with Christ, dwelling constantly on the glorious future that awaits us, proclaiming to others the unsearchable riches of Christ."*

v14-16, The revelations and teachings that Jesus had given the Eleven, fulfilled in the events of the cross, would be the basis for their remaining loyal, safe, and joyful. But the very things that are the basis for Christian joy are the very things the world despises and it hates those who enjoy these benefits.

Because they are “not of this world” - they are *strangers and aliens* in it (1 Peter 2:11), their temptation will be to ask to be removed out of it to go to their home country with the Father.

Their hatred of the things and people of God is fanned into heat by the Evil One – Satan.

Throughout church history, Christians have sought relief from the world's hatred by withdrawing from it socially into communes or societies or enclaves, and in other ways, or by compromising with it. Some individuals tend to withdraw from a disagreeable and dangerous environment, while others prefer to blend into it. Jesus' will, however, was that His disciples should do neither of these things. He wanted them to remain loyal to God, while actively serving as His ambassadors to the unsaved living in a fallen world. Our sense of mission and our sense of identity should control our desire for comfort.

**"Christians must not take themselves out of the world but remain in meaningful contact with it, trusting in God's protection while they witness for Jesus." *Blum***

**"Three of the only prayers *not* granted to saints, recorded in Scripture, are the prayers, of Moses, Elijah, Jonah *to be* 'taken out of the world.'" *JC Ryle***