

The Apostles of Our Lord

Gospel of John, Part LIX

John 17:6-19

Stuart W. Bryan

I. The Father of Lights (cf. Jas 1:17)

- 1-5 *The Son prays for Himself and the Father*
- 6-19 *The Son prays for the Twelve Disciples*
- 20-26 *The Son prays for the Church and the World*

II. Praying for the Apostles

A. Jesus Recounts His Own and the Apostles' Faithfulness (6-8 cf. 6:68-69)

Jesus has: (1) *Manifested* the Father's name to the apostles (6a) and (2) *Given* the apostles the words which the Father gave to Him (8a). Jesus' work, in other words, has been the work of _____. The apostles have: (1) *kept* the Father's word (6d), (2) *known* that all things which the Father has given the Son are from the Father Himself (7), (3) *received* the words the Father gave to the Son (8b), (4) *known* truly that Jesus came forth from the Father (8c), and (5) *believed* that the Father sent Jesus (8d). The apostles' work, in other words, has been the work of _____.

B. Jesus Prays for the Apostles

1. Unify Them (9-11)

Knowing that He is no longer going to be with the disciples, Jesus prays that the *Holy Father*, the One separate from the lying, deceit, and divisiveness of the world, would *keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are* (11). Jesus prays that the unity of the Father and Son would be manifested in their own unity with one another.

2. Protect Them (12-16 cf. 13:18-19)

Second, Jesus prays that the Father would also protect them. He revealed the word of God to them and, because they received His word, the world hates them. He does not pray that the Father would _____ *them from the world* but *protect them in the world* from all the assaults of the Evil One.

3. Sanctify Them (17-19)

Finally, Jesus prays that the Father would *sanctify* the apostles, grow them in _____. If they are to be representatives of the "*Holy Father*" (11b), then they must be holy. How will this sanctification take place? First, it will take place by the grace and empowerment of _____ Himself. Second, sanctification takes place *by means of the truth, the _____ of God*.

- I. Prologue: The Identity of the Son of God (1:1-18)
- II. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Public Ministry (1:19-12:50)
 - A. The Son of God Revealed (1:19-4:54)
 - B. The Son of God Rejected (5:1-12:36)
 - C. Conclusion (12:37-50)
- III. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Passion and Resurrection (13:1-20:31)
 - A. Introduction: He knew His hour had come (13:1)
 - B. Jesus Prepares the Disciples for His Departure (13:2-17:26)
 - C. Jesus Departs this world to the Father (18:1-20:29)
 - D. Conclusion: Purpose of the Gospel (20:30-31)
- IV. Epilogue: The Future Mission of the Son of God (21)

III. The Blessing of the Apostles

A. The Foundation of Apostolic Teaching (Eph 2:20; Rev 21:9-14)

The unity of the apostles was critical because the apostles served as the _____ of the church. Paul writes in Ephesians that the church “*was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets*” (2:20). The Apostle John describes the New Jerusalem, “*The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were written the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*” (Rev 21:14). Jesus built the Church upon the apostles; He sent them into the world (Jn 17:18). Hence, if they had been divided, then the message of Christ would have been compromised. And Satan tried to divide them:

For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers through whom you believed, as the Lord gave to each one? I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. (1 Cor 3:3-6)

B. Opposition to Apostolic Teaching (cf. 15:18-19; Ps 2:1-3; 2 Tim 4:1-5)

We dare not suppose that we will be loved by the world any more than Jesus and the apostles were: “*the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world*” (14). So how does Jesus call us out of the world? He calls us out of the world through His _____ (cf. 17:8,14) and the Word infuriates the world.

“Insofar as they side with [God’s] revelation, the disciples infuriate the world. The world loves its own, and the disciples are not of the world, but are of God and his revelation. This revelation, in presenting the truth and commanding assent, condemns the world and exposes its evil (3:19-21; 7:7), and the world snarls in savage rage.” (Carson, 564-65)

C. The Centrality of Apostolic Teaching (2 Tim 3:10-17; 2 Pet 2:15-16)

So what is our calling in the face of this opposition to apostolic teaching, to the Word of God? Our calling is to delight ourselves in the Word of God. Paul explained to Timothy his calling in the face of the corruption in the world.

¹But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come [when a culture is in decay, this is what will occur]: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! [He then cites some examples and urges Timothy to follow his own.] ¹²Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution [opposition from the world]. ¹³But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:1-5, 12-17):

IV. Conclusion