



Going Beyond the Sermon

Sunday, May 16, 2021 – Dr. John Stephens

“Sent into the World for Jesus”

John 17:6-19

Bible S.W.A.P.

S-Scripture

⁶“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. ¹⁴I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

W-What Does it Say and What Can I Obey?

For this sermon series, the Going Beyond the Sermon notes will look to each Scripture passage for direction in discipleship. We will make connections with the stages of discipleship being experienced by the characters in the stories and where we are in the discipleship journey. For the “What Can I Obey?” portion of study, we will be challenged to take a next step of faith, with the goal of using the passage and notes as a tool for processing and learning to direct ourselves to grow in closeness to Christ.

This week we pause and reflect on Jesus’ prayer for his disciples as recorded in John 17. The following comments from Dr. Jerry Webber shed light on Jesus’ heart for the disciples and for us:

“We get to overhear Jesus at prayer, as we listen in on this “pastoral prayer” he offers on behalf of his disciples. In the first section of his prayer (as John records it), in verses 1-5, he acknowledges to his Father the weight of this moment in his life. “*The hour has come . . .*” Then, in our text for today, he prays for his disciples (vv. 6-19). In the final section of the prayer, verses 20-26, Jesus prays more specifically for all who will follow him through succeeding generations.

Of course, by the time John writes down these words, decades after the crucifixion, few of the original Apostles are still alive. But still, John wants his Early Church to know of Jesus’ concern for the ongoing fruitfulness and well-being of all those who would follow his way, all those who believe in him for the healing and wholeness of persons and the world.

John wants future generations of Christ-followers – us!! – to be rooted in Jesus, as Jesus was rooted in the Father.

John wants future generations of Christ-followers to be one in him as he is one in the Father . . . and he wants us to be one with each other.

John wants future generations of Christ-followers to be so given to the work of the Father in the world, that they know the deep and lasting joy of God, just as Jesus lived in that deep joy in his own ministry.

John wants future generations of Christ-followers to experience the same oneness with each other that Jesus has experienced with his Father . . . and oneness that will serve as a life-sustaining reality when the assaults of the world press in hard.”

A-Apply

No matter what stage of discipleship you find yourself in today, Jesus’ prayer applies to you – for encouragement and also for warning. Webber continues, “When John uses the word “*world*,” he does not mean the general population of people who inhabit the planet; instead, John uses “*world*” to describe the forces at work around us which subvert God’s kingdom and actively oppose the work of God. The word does not describe evil in a generic way, but very specifically denotes the evil which seeks to undermine God’s activity and purposes.

In John 17, John warns his disciples about the ways of this world. He wants them to know the kind of world they will be living in as they carry forward the spirit and message of Christ. But ultimately, Jesus recognizes that the ways of the world have not and will not overcome the design and purposes of God.

There will be elements in the world that stand opposed to God, but those elements are not able to overwhelm God's Spirit and overturn God's will."

As you experience both the encouragement of Jesus' living presence through the Holy Spirit and the evil forces at work in the world that would pull you away from Christ and into isolation, how will you stay connected to Jesus? What is your next step of discipleship as it relates to abiding in Christ?

P-Pray*

Through the awesome mystery and power of the Holy Spirit, the holy, transcendent God draws near to His creation and His children to comfort and confront, to protect and guide. God is alive and active within creation, attempting to draw all people to His heart. The people who are willing to step out into the place of not knowing, the place of dynamic faith, will come to know the constant presence of the one who draws near.

Where is God in Christ showing up in your life right now? Could it be through the door of loss or through your greatest need?

*Each passage in this sermon series invites us to imagine the scene. We will use guided imagery from "Christheart" by Jeanne Miley, as prayer prompts. This week, the prompt is from Know My Presence, p. 271.

**To learn more about the Stages of Discipleship, go to
www.chapelwood.org/mynextstep.**

*Going Beyond the Sermon is written by Teresa Rossy, Director of Grow Ministries,
Chapelwood United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas.*

Source material is quoted throughout. The sermons are streamed online, and worship is in person at 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary of our Greenbay campus. Go to www.chapelwood.org for details.

To get Going Beyond the Sermon in your inbox, e-mail Laura Frost, lfrost@chapelwood.org.

