

Bible Study Notes
Week of October 19, 2008
John 17 - FAITHFULNESS

John 17

¹ After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

"Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ² For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³ Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴ I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

⁶ "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸ For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹ I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name--the name you gave me--so that they may be one as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³ "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. ¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

²⁰ "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

²⁵ "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

Opening question (possible): There is an old saying that when times are hardest, you know who your friends are. When you hear the word 'faithful', is there an experience, an image, or a person that comes to mind?

Overview observation question: As you read through the passage, make note of what and who Jesus is praying for. How much of his prayer is focused on himself, God's purposes, his followers, the world?

- Pray for the Holy Spirit's leading (if you haven't already prayed)
- Read text (I often let people read it over silently and then have it read aloud).

First section – verses 1-12

O What is the context of this prayer of Jesus - Where was Jesus when he was praying? Who was present? What was happening? *Note – you may have to briefly scan the previous chapters.*

I How does this context change the way you understand the passage?

O Throughout this prayer, how much attention does Jesus give to his own impending crisis? Where is his focus?

O How does Jesus demonstrate faithfulness in this part of the prayer?

I What might have led Jesus to 'throw in the towel' at this point of his work and ministry?

I Are there any indicators of what motivated Jesus to remain faithful?

A When has your resolve to be faithful (to a person or a task) been challenged by difficult circumstances?

second section—verses 13-23:

Note: "Sanctify" means "to separate" or "to set apart," usually for some specially good purpose or use. Its derivative meaning thus becomes "dedicate" or "consecrate" and then "to revere" or "to purify." The believer is so changed by the working of God's Word in his life that he is separated from evil and to God. This new devotion, which results in separation from evil, produces purification of life and faithfulness to God's service.

O Where does Jesus demonstrate faithfulness in this part of the prayer?

I This prayer of Jesus was prayed in front of his disciples rather than in private. What message would this prayer send to his disciples that were listening?

I How would it strengthen their ability to remain faithful in the days ahead? Faithful to what? Faithful to whom?

I How do Jesus' words about leaving us "in the world" actually make it more difficult for us to remain faithful?

A In what way do these words have direct implications in your own experience? Do you find yourself in the prayer of Jesus?

third section—verses 24-26

O Faithfulness involves continuous action and connection. What in these verses implies Jesus' ongoing faithfulness to us?

O Faithfulness is about loyalty in relationship. Looking back on this passage, list all the relationships that Jesus mentions which require faithfulness.

A In which of these relationships is faithfulness a challenge for you?

A What in your life gets in the way of your follow-through on commitments to being faithful?

A How can this group demonstrate faithfulness to each other this year?