



Pilgrim Home Baptist Church

NT 2022 Q4 • SENT TOGETHER • JOHN 17:15-17 • 10/9/2022

MAIN POINT

The power and authority of Jesus' prayer is to equip believers for the mission of God.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

In the following situations, would you rather there be a large crowd in attendance, a small group of people, or would you rather be alone: sporting event, concert, birthday party, doctor's appointment, shopping, vacation, elevator ride, worship?

What does this reveal about the types of experiences we like to share with others?

There are times in life when we greatly benefit from the presence, support, and encouragement of other people. Never is this more true than in living out the mission God has given us, which is joyful and rewarding while simultaneously difficult and painful. Thankfully, God doesn't send us alone. He gives us a community in which we gain prayer, support, discernment, accountability, and encouragement.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 17:15-16.

These verses come from Jesus' intercessory prayer for His disciples prior to His crucifixion. This section of Jesus' prayer highlights the tension we feel as those sent to share the story of God's grace with a lost world.

Jesus does not pray for the Father to remove his followers from the world but to protect them from the evil one—what implications does this have? Why have we been left in the world?

What opportunities does being in the world give us that separation from the world would not?

On the other hand, what struggles do we face that we wouldn't face apart from the world?

In John's Gospel, the word "world" takes several different meanings depending on the context. It can indicate the physical earth, humanity apart from God, or the human race in general. In verses 15-16, "world" by context refers to those opposed to God's rule. Jesus' statements that He and His disciples were "not of the world" expressed their distinction from the world system dominated by sin. At the same time, their existence was still "in the world," or on the earth. The world may be opposed to Jesus and His followers, but it is a world desperately in need of the message of salvation in Jesus. Failure to take this message to the world is disobedience to the Great Commission.

Part of Jesus' prayer included protection from the evil one. What dangers do we face as Christians?

How do these dangers help you understand the value of Christian community?

As Jesus' disciples witnessed for Him, they faced temptations and threats. Because the disciples labored in a hostile environment, Jesus asked the Father to protect them from the evil one. Jesus' prayer impressed two truths on His followers: (1) Their work for Him would not be easy; and (2) in light of that reality, Jesus asked God to watch over them with care. The next part of Jesus' prayer shows us how we accomplish living as citizens in these two opposing worlds.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 17:17 AND 19.

What does it mean to be sanctified? How does God's Word sanctify you?

Why is sanctification essential to our ability to live in this world but not be influenced by it?

One of the dominant themes of John's Gospel is Jesus' mission as a model for believers. The verb "sanctify" in verse 19 means "to set apart for sacred use or make holy." In the Old Testament, "sanctify" was used to describe the consecrating of priests and sacrifices. Jesus sent us into the world not to be like the world, but to represent Him to the world. We do this by

allowing Scripture to transform us into the image of Christ and then living in a way that reflects Him and His truth to others.

What role do we play in one another's sanctification?

What role does accountability through community play in Christian mission?

We are to pray that God will continually set us apart for His service, and that He would help us develop holiness and integrity. None of us can serve God effectively by human strength and ingenuity. We must depend on God to work in us to accomplish these goals. We also must depend on the wisdom and accountability of others to help us grow. God never designed or desired for us to grow apart from the fellowship and community we find in the church.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Jesus' mission has redefined our lives. How has His mission also redefined our relationships with other Christians?

**What are some areas of your life you have prayed to be removed from the world?
How does this passage change your perspective on praying for God's protection?**

What are some ways we can support one another in Jesus' mission to the world?

**Do you know any Christians who are disconnected from the fellowship of the church?
How could you encourage them to get plugged back in?**

PRAYER

Thank God for sending you on mission with a community to support you. Praise Him for the gift of the church. Pray that we would help each other take seriously the mission God has placed before us and stir one another on in mission until the day Christ returns.

COMMENTARY

| JOHN 17:15-17

17:15-17. How is it possible to be "in the world" and yet not of the world? These verses answer that question. Whatever the biblical doctrine of separation might mean, it certainly does not mean isolation. In the early Middle Ages when the world began to corrupt the purity of the church, some saw monasticism as the only solution. It was apparent to them that one could

maintain purity of life and a clear relationship to God only by hiding from the world behind ten-foot walls. Some believers even became lone hermits living in the hills until communal monasticism became more popular.

One could never derive such a view from John 17. Jesus prayed not for removal from the world but for an awareness of its evils so they could be avoided. The danger is not the general presence of evil but the evil one. The New Testament indicates that the world is in the ultimate control of the prince of the power of the air who does battle against the living God by affecting the lives of his people. The antidote is sanctification. The Greek word for sanctify means "to set apart for God's use."