

COMMUNION MEDITATION
"Set Apart for Mission"
John 17:18, 19

Feb 2, 1986

INTRODUCTION

1. Scripture is definite. The believer is in the world (cosmos), but is not of the world (v. 15). In this, we are like our Lord (v. 16).
2. Being in the world demands the keeping work of God from the Evil One (v. 15). Thank God for this. By this thought, the doctrine of separation becomes a part of the Lord's prayer.
3. To be set apart (sanctified) is a petition of the Lord for us (v. 17). It is therefore, a work of God. An agency to accomplish this is the Word of God (v. 17). This is a direct reference to the Scriptures. It will forever be true that the Holy Bible teaches a holy life. To be wholly sanctified, it is necessary to use the whole Bible. Scripture cleanses the believer (Psa. 119:9, 11; John 15:3; Eph. 5:26).
4. Now, the Lord's Prayer considers another aspect of sanctification and truth related to the believer's presence in the world. Look at the connection carefully.

1. THE BELIEVER'S COMMISSION v. 18

a. Related

How precious this is--the Son sent into the world by the Father. He was the heavenly One come down to earth. He was sent to reveal the Father, to show forth His glory (1:14, 18). He was sent to seek and save that which was lost. (3:16; 5:36; 6:29). Make no mistake about it. The aorist tense verb documents the historical veracity of the incarnation. He came to fulfill the Father's will for redemption. In Jesus Christ, men see the Father (14:7-12) and the love of God (1 Jn. 4:9). Glory, glory, glory to God.

b. Stated

Now the reason for v. 17 becomes clear. Leaving believers in the world, the Lord prayed for their sanctification in the truth. Why? Because they are sent (aorist like above) by Christ into the world. As He was the Father's representative, so believer's are Christ's. Therefore, the need to be holy, separated to God from pollutions. Without the equipment of a separated life, there is no sense talking about counting for God in a dark world. Note that the believers, by this commission, differ from the twelve and the seventy (Mt. 10:5, 6; Lk. 10:1-12). Now the mission is for the world. This is a distinctive

of the pres dispensation (Acts 15:11).

2. THE SAVIOR'S DEDICATION v. 19

a. Personal sanctification

This is the second plea of the Lord in support of His petition (v. 17). The commission (v. 18) was the first, now the Lord advances His own merit and action. The most obvious reference here is to the cross to which our Lord set apart Himself (Heb. 10:14). He entered into this sacrificial service freely and voluntarily (10:18). Moreover, He did this all for their sakes (Eph. 5:25, 26; Heb. 13:12).

b. Purposeful sanctification

A purpose clause using a perfect passive verb expresses the intent of our Lord's action--that believers might remain sanctified (holy). He is to be the object of the believer's affections, contemplation, and worship. As one enjoys the Lord in this manner, a dramatic change takes place (2 Cor. 3:18). Hence, both the written Word (v. 17) and the living Word (v. 19) become agencies of sanctification for the believer.

CONCLUSION

Before our blessed Lord suffered at the cross, He prayed. Oh, how He yearned for our holiness to the end that we might represent Him adequately. May that truth be burned into our hearts for His glory. Amen.

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth, through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.*

*Hast Thou not bid us love Thee, God and King?
All, all Thine own--soul, heart and strength and mind.
I see Thy cross--there teach my heart to cling.
Oh, let me seek Thee, and, oh, let me find.*