

**May 6-12, 2018**

**By Pastor Keith Kolstad**

**Zion Lutheran Church, Marinette, WI**

**John 17:6-19 (NRSV)**

[Jesus prayed:] **“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. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for 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. <sup>9</sup>I 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. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>And 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. <sup>12</sup>While 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. <sup>13</sup>But 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. <sup>14</sup>I 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. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”**

Sunday, May 6, 2018

Text: John 17:1a (NRSV)

**After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said,**

This week’s text comes from the Great Priestly Prayer of Jesus. It is neither the beginning of the prayer nor the end. Thus, we enter into a prayer that has already been going on and will finish outside of the confines of this pericope.

Within this paragraph we hear Jesus’ first two intercessions on behalf of his followers: Jesus wants his followers to be protected and he wants them to be sanctified or made holy. His third intercession, which comes in the next paragraph, is for God to make us all one. The final intercession of the prayer reflects the desire of Jesus to have his followers always be with him and see his glory. These are significant requests that Jesus makes on our behalf.

So, the big question is this: Was Jesus’ prayer answered? Are we protected from the evil one? Have we been made holy? Have we all been made one? Are we always with Jesus? We can and

should answer “yes” to this first question as well as the others, but that begs yet another question: How have we seen this answered prayer in our lives?

Let us pray: *We know, O Lord, that your prayer was answered, but it takes time to ponder how we see that answer in our lives. Grant us that time now and lead our hearts to gratitude for the ways that this answered prayer has blessed our lives. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Monday, May 7, 2018

Text: John 17:1a (NRSV)

**After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said,**

To listen in on someone praying a prayer on our behalf is often a fairly profound experience. Hearing our names and our concerns lifted up to the Lord can be humbling and life giving.

Think of those times when you have heard people praying for you. In light of those experiences, how does it feel to listen in on this prayer that Jesus is praying on your behalf?

Let us pray: *You want us to be protected. You want us to be holy. You want us all to be one, and you want us to always be with you. Thank you for showing us your heart in this prayer, a heart that is infinitely concerned about our wellbeing. Guide us to show that same concern for others. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Text: John 17:6-8 (NRSV)

**<sup>6</sup>“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. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; <sup>8</sup>for 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.**

How wonderful it is that Jesus assumes we have kept God’s word. And he tells us what that looks like: We know that everything God has given to Jesus is from God; that the words God gave to Jesus, Jesus gave to us; that we received these words and know that Jesus came from God.

What does keeping God's word look like in your life?

Let us pray: *We are not sure how to feel about your assumption that we have kept your word because we can think of lots of times when we haven't. Thank you for your grace and the many ways you have inspired us to keep your word. Help us live out that word in all that we say and do. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Text: John 17:9-10 (NRSV)

**<sup>9</sup>I 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. <sup>10</sup>All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.**

Jesus says that he has been glorified in us. How does that happen? How is Jesus glorified in your life? How does your life give glory to Jesus? What are the signs that our lives are glorifying Jesus? Is this something that we do or is it something that Jesus does through us, or even in spite of us? Is Jesus' glory simply the fact that we who are God's are also Jesus'?

Maybe part of the answer here is the fact that we are the living body of Jesus, also known as the church, and that Jesus wants to be known through us.

Let us pray: *Having your glory shine through what we say and do worries us a bit because you know what we've said and done, and some of it doesn't seem to glorify you as much as we'd like. But you don't abandon us because of it. You don't leave us for those who seem more faithful than us. Every once in a while, you have been glorified through us and it has been a blessing to be a part of it. Guide us to continue doing so. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Thursday, May 10, 2018

Text: John 17:13 (NRSV)

**<sup>13</sup>But 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.**

Imagine the joy of Jesus. My wife and I are enjoying our first grandchild. When our granddaughter lights up at the sight of us it fills us with so much joy. I have a hunch that our joy is nothing compared to the joy that Jesus has even though it is fueled by the same love. The joy of Jesus comes out of the purity of God's love. It is found in the sheer delight that God has for all of God's children. Jesus says that he wants that joy to be complete within all of us. So, how does it feel to know that Jesus wants his joy to be complete within you?

*Let us pray: It is difficult to imagine your joy, O Lord, just as it is difficult to imagine your love. What a blessing to know that you want nothing more than your joy to be complete within us. This is why you ask the Father for all these things within this prayer. Help us to grow in this joy and lead us to be bearers of this joy to all the world. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Friday, May 11, 2018

Text: John 17:14-19 (NRSV)

**<sup>14</sup>I 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. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth."**

We are human. We breathe the world's air. We use the world's gravity. We eat the world's food. We enjoy the beauty and wonder of the world. We are made up of the dust of the world and we will return to the dust of the world. Time is an essential part of our world and of our lives. We live out our lives in the confines of the world, and yet, Jesus says here, more than once, that we do not belong to the world. Why do we not belong to the world?

*Let us pray: O Lord, in the waters of Holy Baptism you make it clear that we belong to you; that we are one with you. We know that this is a relationship that can never be severed. Thank you. Empower us to share this good news in all that we say and do. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*



Saturday, May 12, 2018

Text: John 17:14-19 (NRSV)

**<sup>14</sup>I 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. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.”**

Jesus says that he sends us into the world just as he was sent into the world. So, where in the world have you been sent, and what blessings do you bring to that part of the world?

Let us pray: *We are your living body in the world, O Lord. Your hands. Your feet. Your voice. Open our eyes to those places you want us to go in order to bring the blessings of your love and joy. It is in you that we pray, Amen.*

