

The High Calling

John 17:18-26

We greet you with Grace and Peace from Jesus Christ. We are honored to be teaching His word via radio and we are very thankful you have joined us. This is Hope for Today, and this program is produced by Heralds of Hope. Heralds of Hope began back in 1967 with the goal of broadcasting expository Bible teaching on American radio stations. 5 years later the international broadcast was started, and to this day we continue to broadcast expository Bible teaching. By God's grace the ministry has grown since then and we are currently broadcasting in about 20 different languages. We continue to seek God for direction and pray that He will use us to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

As you remember we are studying through the Gospel of John and today we will finish up the high priestly prayer from John 17. This last section is titled the High Calling and Jesus makes some very amazing statements in this passage. Before we begin today's teaching, I'd like for us to think some more about a phrase from verse 21.

In this verse Jesus says, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee," in this verse Jesus declares His oneness with the Father. This is a big deal because when He said he is one with God, he means he is God.

How can this be? There are so many questions that pop into our minds when we try to grasp the idea that Jesus was God. Questions like, why would God limit Himself to a body? How could Jesus have been both God and human? Or if he was human, could he have sinned. But he was God, and God cannot sin., How can we explain that? We won't be able to answer all the questions, but we know enough to have faith and trust Him and believe He is God.

For me it is helpful to think about some other possibilities. So, Jesus declared his oneness with the Father. If I would hear someone say this today, I would be very skeptical and think it's a lie. Could Jesus have been lying about this? If Jesus said this and it is not true, then it disqualifies the rest of what he said. If you have ever been lied to you know how that person's credibility is totally ruined with you, and rightly so. If they lie once you can't be sure when or if they are telling the truth. When I look at the record of Jesus life and see its effect on the world in the last 2000 years, I can't convince myself that all His teaching was good, but this statement was a lie. The possibility that Jesus was lying does not line up with reality.

You may think Jesus was crazy, only crazy people think they are God. Again, I would say look at the rest of what we know about Him. The world he came to was crazy, and the way he was treated was crazy. But this word does not describe Him, in fact His teachings were very accurate and full of truth. It

does not line up to say some of His teaching is good some of it is crazy. Possibly one or the other but not both. So, Jesus was not lying and he sure is not crazy.

Let's imagine that he was telling the truth and He actually is God. Then His life should have been incredible, history should revolve around Him. If He were God, I'd expect Him to be alive and stronger than death. If Jesus were God surely there would be lots of people today who know Him. I am sure you realize Jesus has done each of these. His life has changed the world like no other and there are millions who love Him and would give their life for Him, and I have found Him to be very alive.

I don't think we will ever be able to answer all the questions or totally explain how God came in the flesh. If we could completely understand it that means he would have to be small and finite, because that's what we are. I am thankful God is bigger than our comprehension and we won't ever figure it all out. We know enough to live by faith and trust him knowing He is God.

For the rest of today's teaching let's give our attention to J Mark Horst, as he explains the rest of the statements from John 17 that call us to a higher way of living.

Very few if any people live up to their full potential. We are doing less than we are capable of doing. That's true in many respects. Our minds are capable of much more than we engage them with. Bodily, physically we probably could do much more than we are doing if we were, in fact, doing all we could. The real sin is when we are satisfied with less than the possible. To be the best we can, we should reach for more every day. We need to know then what is expected of us.

In the two preceding messages we meditated together in the prayer of Jesus just before He was arrested and crucified. Jesus prayed other prayers, but the ones that were recorded in the Gospels are mostly short prayers. We do know though that from the Gospel records that Jesus spent whole nights in prayer at times and on one occasion He fasted for forty days. Jesus was a person of prayer. But not many of His prayers are recorded. This one in John 17 is what some people call the high priestly prayer.

Let us think about **THE HIGH CALLING OF BEING A DISCIPLE** from the prayer of Jesus in John 17:18-26.

17 *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

18 *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.*

19 *And for their sake I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*

20 *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*

- 21 *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*
- 22 *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one*
- 23 *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*
- 24 *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*
- 25 *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.*
- 26 *And I have declared unto them thy name and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*
- 27

In this final part of Jesus' prayer, He set forth the distinctive RIGHTS His disciples are to enjoy.

The disciples facing their high calling were **To be Sent Like Jesus**.

He prayed, "As thou hast sent me, even so I have sent them". That is a distinct mission. What a calling we have to be in the world like Jesus was in the world. This is a right which many disciples have missed, I fear. The purpose is so that others will believe. Others, that is what we are existing for as disciples, to tell others so that there will be more disciples, that the world may know. Jesus' prayer, "That the world may know thou hast sent me," that the Father sent the Son.

Yes, this is a very high calling, a right that too few disciples even care to think about. The world will know who Jesus is when we disciples take our places, understanding that we have been sent into the world like Jesus was sent into the world. Nothing turned Him aside.

My friend, let me challenge you with this. If you are a believer, then understand that Jesus said that we are in this world like He was in this world. May the Lord help us to understand this.

The disciples following Jesus in their high calling can expect **To be Glorified with Jesus**.

I rejoice in this! Jesus prayed that He had taken the glory which God had given Him and had showed it unto them or given it unto them. He had expressed His desire to have His disciples enjoy the kind of oneness that He and the Father experienced. Several times in this prayer He said, "That they may

be one as we are one.” That is a beautiful idea, and one that we certainly should rise to. It is a right, a high calling of our discipleship.

But it is to me, I would say, even more wonderful, to share Jesus’ glory. He said He wants them whom the Father has given to Him to share His glory, “I want them to be with me where I am that they may behold my glory.”

Right now, our eyes are not equipped to see glory. Some day when we have our new bodies, our resurrected bodies, we are going to be able to see glory. At that fulfilling time we are going to have the wonderful experience of sharing the glory of Jesus. That is our high calling, that is our right, to be glorified with Jesus. Praise the Lord!

Uniquely related to the rights of calling and glory is the right **To be Taught by Jesus**.

He prayed, “I have declared Thy name to them and will declare it”. Jesus was a wonderful teacher, the best teacher. Many people look at the teachings of Jesus and say this is outstanding, this is better than any teaching we have seen anywhere. The disciples knew that God had sent Jesus. They could understand from His teachings that He was more than an ordinary teacher. He is and He always has been. Jesus taught them about God. He could pray, “I have told them, so that the love which thou hast loved me with, may be in them, and I in them”. There is a kind of personal instruction here. Yes, Jesus taught them, and to be taught by Jesus is a right, a distinct right of disciples.

I’m glad to testify to the fact that Jesus does teach the believer, the disciple who is willing to be really a disciple. Many believers do not live up to their rights. What a high calling we have, to be sent like Jesus into the world, to be glorified with Jesus in the future, and now to be taught by Jesus. I appeal to you if you are a believer attain to your rights.

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Now, I urge you to tune in next week as Pastor J. Mark continues our study from John's Gospel. You won't want to miss it. And until then, keep looking to Jesus, He'll give you hope for today!