

# "In the World but not of the World"

Thomas Robinson, May 23, 2010

## John 17: 6-19

<sup>6</sup> "I have revealed **your name** to those whom **you gave me out of the world**. They were yours; you gave them to me and **they have kept your word**. <sup>7</sup> Now **they know** that **everything** you have given me **comes from you**. <sup>8</sup> For **I gave them the words** you gave me and **they accepted** them. They **truly knew** that **I came from you**, and they **believed that you sent me**.

<sup>9</sup> **I pray for them**. I am not praying for the world, but for **those you have given me**, for **they are yours**. <sup>10</sup> **All I have is yours, and all you have is mine**. And **glory has come to me through them**.

<sup>11</sup> I will remain (am) in the world no longer, but **they are still in the world**, and I am coming to you. **Holy Father, protect (keep) them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one**.

<sup>12</sup> While I was with them, **I protected (kept) them** and kept them safe by **your name**, which **you gave me**. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. [Psa 41:9]

<sup>13</sup> 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**.

<sup>14</sup> 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**.

<sup>15</sup> My prayer is **not** that you **take them out of the world** but that you **protect (keep) them from the evil one**. <sup>16</sup> **They are not of the world**, even as **I am not of it**. <sup>17</sup> **Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth**.

<sup>18</sup> **As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world**.

<sup>19</sup> **For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be sanctified in truth."**

## John 1:14, 16-18

<sup>14</sup> And the **Word became flesh** and dwelt among us, and we have seen **his glory**, glory as of the **only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth**. ... <sup>16</sup> And from **his fullness** we have all received, **grace upon grace**. <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** came through **Jesus Christ**. <sup>18</sup> **No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known**.

## John 14:6

<sup>6</sup> Jesus answered, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

## Romans 8:8-14

<sup>8</sup> Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup> You, however, **are not in the flesh but in the Spirit**, if in fact **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Anyone who does not have **the Spirit of Christ** does not belong to him. <sup>10</sup> But **if Christ is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, **the Spirit is life** because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> If **the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you**, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also **give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you**. <sup>12</sup> So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. <sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by

the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For all who are **led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.**

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## **Jesus' Prayer Turns to His Disciples**

Jesus began his prayer speaking of Glory and eternal life, knowing God. Now he focuses on his followers who are about to be hit with the reality of his death and to enter a world never before experienced – God dies for me, resurrection begins.

A time of change and danger. Everything they have known/believed about Jesus will be made to seem foolish. They'll be called back to "the real world" – sober truth. What Jesus has done will be in their care, and they will be in His care.

## **The World and Its God/gods**

The danger is where they are – in "the world." Where else? What is the world?

Always a double-sided, ambiguous reality. An object, a place. A person, power.

The world is the stage of the great human drama. Created by God. Belongs to God.

God loves the world (3:16); Jesus gives life to it, is light of the world. (6:33; 8:12)

It is the field of all human action and vulnerability, where every choice matters. As God's creation, the world should delight in God as creator, preserver, Lord. But ....

The world is the human problem. God is pushed aside. The world makes a new identity.

It defines things; says what's what. Success, goodness, freedom, power, life.

Often pushes God up to high, impersonal distance, too glorious for the mundane.

Makes human gods we actually serve: power, money, ambition, approval, looks...

all apart from the reality of the one God who is God. Realm of untruth, distortion.

Where is God? In the world, permeating it, but not of it, beyond, outside. Where is

Jesus? In the world, incarnate God and human, but not of it. Bringing God's reality.

Jesus draws the disciples into that relationship – in the world but not of the world.

## **Identity, Truth, and Holiness**

Jesus speaks of God's name, given to him. Not a mantra; God's identity, reality, glory.

This is the truth, reality of God, secure from the changes of this world, invulnerable.

The self-giving love of Father, Son, Spirit that Jesus knows and reveals to us. It is the distinct, set-apart reality that makes God Holy. *"Keep them in Your Name!"*

A person who knows God (has "eternal life") sees the gods of the world as idols.

Are you a child of God? How presumptuous! How could you claim that? But it's true!

Who / What tells you who you are? Voice of a parent; business; ethnic identity;

pleasures, addictions, nation, family. God makes diverse humans one – in the one

God who is "we," the Trinity of love. Jesus' full Joy even as he goes to death.

## **Sent into the World – Holy**

Jesus' disciples *"are not of the world"* (14,16). This is not their/our achievement but a gift from God. Jesus does not pray that they may achieve sanctity/holiness, but that God may keep them / sanctify them. Security not vulnerable to my failures.

Jesus sanctifies himself for them – lays down his life for them – so that they may share in this holiness in the truth of God – an identity beyond this world but also in this world, telling the truth about its false gods and empty glitter. True joy.

Jesus sends his disciples into the world– the field of action and conflict – with his truth.

I must open my life to that identity, truth, security, joy, holiness. Live the truth.