

# John 17 1 of 2

Sermon #0953

Study by W. D. Frazee

A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets told Elisha her husband was dead, and she was in debt. The prophet of God asked the woman, What do you have in the house? She said she had nothing but a little oil in a vessel. The prophet told her to go to her neighbors and borrow pots and pans and kettles, and vessels of various kinds. She did. Then he told her to start pouring oil from that one vessel she had.

How many vessels got filled with oil? Everyone she borrowed. Then she asked the prophet what to do. He said go and sell the oil and pay your debts, and live on the rest. It worked.

I often wonder if she wished she had borrowed more pots and pans.

How much are you expecting? The great law of blessing is laid down in the Savior's words:

"According to your faith be it unto you" Matthew 9:29.

I have asked the Lord for the biggest blessing of my life. Oh, I want it. I want you to have it. We need it. We are almost home, but we are not almost ready. So I pray that God will greatly bless us as we look into the Word, and with the help of the Spirit see what great things God is ready and willing to do.

We are told by inspiration that the seventeenth chapter of John comprehends and includes more than any other chapter in the New Testament. We are also told that we are to make this prayer our first study. We have looked at it before, but somehow in recent days I see some things in it that I have ever seen before. I want to share them with you.

This chapter is taken up entirely with our Lord's prayer just before He went into Gethsemane. He had met with His disciples in the upper room. They celebrated the Passover. He inaugurated the sacrificial supper by which they were to commemorate His sacrifice for them through the coming years. He talked with them. Now He came almost to the Garden of Gethsemane and paused. Under the bright moonlight He kneeled, surrounded by His disciples, and prayed these wonderful words:

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this

is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.

I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of Thee. For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given Me; for they are Thine. And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them.

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; 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. And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: 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.

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. O righteous Father,

the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. 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" John 17.

I call your attention to four thoughts in the heart of Christ as He poured out His prayer for His disciples.

The first is Christ's prayer for unity. He prayed that His church might be one. He prayed that His disciples might share a union such as He had shared with His Father from eternity. And notice that it was not just for those disciples that were with Him that night. He prayed for those who would believe on Him through the Word.

So the heart of Jesus is set upon His disciples being one. He speaks throughout this prayer of His love which makes that possible. It is the love between the Father and the Son that is the basis for unity. It is the love for Jesus in our hearts that will enable us to love one another as He has loved us, and to be as closely united as the Father and the Son are.

With this prayer for unity there is a prayer for separation. With this teaching of unity there is a teaching of separation. It may seem strange that in the same prayer would be the thought of unity and separation, but these are two sides of the same coin. If we are to be in union with Jesus we must experience separation from the world. He says twice that His disciples are not of the world as He is not of the world. The world hates them.

How separated from the world are we to be? As completely as Jesus was. There is to be no more union between us and this wicked world than there was between Jesus and the wicked world that crucified Him.

Notice that Jesus prayed not to take them out of the world, but keep them from evil. There are those who would be so thankful if Jesus would take them to heaven right away so they wouldn't be tempted anymore. If they can't get to heaven they would like to find someplace where there are no temptations. Well, Jesus didn't pray that we would be that separated from the world in that way.

Speaking on this point someone says it is like a boat on the ocean. It is all right for the boat to be on the ocean as long as water doesn't get into the boat. Suppose water starts seeping into the boat. Instead of a place of safety, it is what? A place of disaster. That has happened through the ages again and again.

How God and the angels must weep to see the world seeping in and very little done about it. To the pumps, brethren. Oh, that God may help us to keep afloat in this wicked sea of lawlessness with which we are surrounded. There is no way to get out of this world until Jesus comes and takes us. But that does not lessen in anyway our responsibility, for Jesus desires that we shall be kept from contamination; that we shall be saved from the evil of this world. So His great prayer is not to take us out of this world, but keep us from evil.

Is this world evil? That is the question. Is it bad or isn't it. Is it a rattlesnake, or something that looks like it? Is it a tiger or a lion that bites, or a big overgrown cat? And if you rub it right it won't hurt you. Which is it? How do you feel toward the world. Are you afraid of it? Do you hate it?

From some aspects this world thinks it is making a very good record for itself at the present time. It is a fact that never in the history of this country did so many people have it so good. People look at all these wonderful inventions and think men are really doing things. Are you enamored with all that? Are you caught up with the spirit of admiration for human progress, human pride, human wisdom, human knowledge? Ah, friends, be careful. Jesus prayed that you and I might be kept from this wicked world.

We are not anymore of the world than He is. He did not fit in the world of His time. Three and a half years was all they could stand of His public work. They nailed Him to the cross. If He came back today they would do it over again.

How is it that some of us have such an easy time getting along with the world? Well, we have learned how to have better public relations than Jesus did. Yes we have, and God pity us. Oh, that we may help to answer this prayer that we may be no more a part of this world than He was; that we may be alert, ready to flee from this and that instead of being drawn to stare at and admire what is going on in this world. If the spirit of Jesus is in our hearts what is going on in this world will not attract us.

In Ellen White's dream the path got higher and higher, steeper and narrower. Occasionally those traveling that path heard sounds from the abbess below. They heard the dance songs and war songs and the sounds of rivalry and murder. They shuddered and were more anxious to keep on the path.

Friends, how do the sights and sounds of this world affect you? That is the question. You will give some evidence in the way you look and talk and act. Imitation is the sincerest compliment you can give anyone, isn't it? And when you try to act like the world you compliment it. When you try to look like the world you give the world quite a bit of flatter. Oh, that God may help us to see what Jesus is praying about, that we may be as separate from the world as He was.

When we are we will be hated just as Jesus was hated. But He prays that we may be sanctified, set apart. That is separation. That is why we keep the Sabbath. It is a sign of being set apart.

Some people are sorry that everyone doesn't keep Saturday. It would be so much easier. Indeed. It is too bad that everyone doesn't love and obey God. But if you think it through, it is a fortunate thing that the enemy has another flag so there is no confusion over the matter. It is the fortunate thing that the flag of God stands to identify those who are willing to be separated, different, peculiar.

The third thing to notice is that there is a purpose for being in the world. What are we here for? Jesus tells us, "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." How did Jesus happen to come here? Did He come

here to have a good time? Did He come to get rich in real estate? Did He come to make a great name for Himself?

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16.

Jesus came on a mission to save us. He was sent. He came on an errand. That is all He did the whole time He was here.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" Matthew 20:28.

Jesus went back as soon as He got it done. Now He says, I have gotten some men out of the world, and I am sending them into the world just as You, Father, sent Me into the world.

Did you know that you have been commissioned? Or have you? That is the question. Friends, I hope you have. I hope you have accepted the mission. Jesus came with a mission. He has sent His followers on a mission. And His prayer is that we shall succeed in our mission as He succeeded in His mission.

Are you on that mission? Is that what you have to live for? Do you live for anything else? Well, if you have anything else to live for you will miss this. This is all or nothing. It calls for everything, and it takes everything. And the reason we are still in this world is because so many of God's children are fiddling around with a hundred different things, and trying to do this on the side. Some day God's children are going to get as burdened about this as Jesus was, and they are going to answer this prayer. And their whole life and time will be devoted to doing just what Jesus did.

It cost Him something. It cost Him everything. He was rich, but He became poor. He was the King of the universe, but He emptied Himself and became a servant. He walked in Galilee and Judea a homeless wanderer, reproach His daily lot. He had what would be called a hard time, and very discouraging experiences. But He made it possible for every soul to be saved. It was made possible in those thirty-three years by His life and death. I say it was a grand success. What do you say?

He has invited you and me to go on a similar mission. We can't save as many as He saved. It will be His love and power that does the work. But He has invited our hands and voices used by Him. It is a wonderful privilege, isn't it? Let's do it. Let's take Him seriously on this. Let's say like Peter and John and Matthew that we have put all we have into this one work of winning souls for Christ.

Oh, heaven is waiting to demonstrate what is to be done. But so many human problems enter. So many are like that man that Jesus called, and he said, Yes, Lord, I will come, but I have so many things to fix up at home. I have to bury my father. I have to stay at home and take care of things there. Then I will come.

Jesus called another one, and he said, Yes, Lord, I will come. But let me go first and bid farewell to those who are at my house. Jesus said:

"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" Luke 9:62.

There is something about our dedication that Jesus is calling for that very few people know anything about. Some day this mission that gripped the heart of Jesus is going to grip the hearts of His sincere children, and they are going to do just what He did. They are going to finish the work. It will take the Spirit and power that rested upon Jesus to accomplish it. All heaven is anxious to pour it out.

But it has to have clean and empty vessels—vessels that are not filled up with a lot of other things. If Jesus should invite you to share with Him such a life as He invited His disciples to share nearly two thousand years ago, would you take Him seriously? Or would you say? Dear Lord, there are certain things I will have to take care of first. There are certain things You will need to guarantee.

What did Jesus guarantee Matthew and Peter and Thomas? He guaranteed them nothing but the joy of service with Him, and the assurance that they would have tribulation and persecution. They got both. They got the joy and the trouble. Both are waiting for us if we will enter in. Oh, let's accept the mission. What do you say?

The first thought from Jesus' prayer is union with Jesus and one another. The second is separation from the world. The third is mission to the world. Those things are not contradictory. They work together fine. In fact, unless you are separate from the world you don't have a mission to the world.

Number four is sweet and precious. "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." What is another word for joy? Happiness. Do you like happiness?

Someone says, Oh, yes. That's what I am hunting for all the time.

That's your trouble. You won't find it. Happiness doesn't come that way. In fact, God has fixed it so you won't find it that way.

"God in His providence has willed that no one can secure happiness by living for himself alone" *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, page 224.

You can't do it.

A man who is called the greatest man of this century died a few days ago. His last words were, "I am bored with it all."

Those were not Paul's or Stephen's last words. No. Thank God, they had something worth living and dying for, and a hope beyond that reached to the eternal ages.

If we will help Jesus answer His prayer, He will see to it that we will have full joy. He says, I want My joy fulfilled in them. I want them to be full of joy.

You say, I don't see how anybody could be happy that had to be separate from all the marvelous things in this world, and had to spend his life in sacrificial service.

No, you don't see that unless you are born again.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" John 3:3.

That's the truth. Look at a fish out in the water. Talk to him about the wonderful times that some people have, and how nice it is to get out and go over the trails and see the trees and flowers.

He would say, No, not for me. I couldn't take it.

And he couldn't. That poor fish has to stay in that water. I am so glad I don't have to get where he is. It wouldn't do for me.

Which world do we belong to? The upper world, or the lower world? Jesus has a joy that He wants to share with us. That is what this prayer is about.

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25) each one of those who were faithful when the day of reckoning came were invited by the master:

"Well done, good and faithful servant; . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord" Matthew 25:23.

What is the joy of the Lord? If you want something interesting, look up the comments from the Spirit of Prophecy on that text. You will find that over and over again the statement is given that the joy of the Lord is in seeing souls redeemed. That is what led Jesus on this mission. That's what caused Him to leave the throne and come to the stable and the cross. He loved people so much that it made Him happy to do things for them in the hope of getting them to come with Him back to the Father's house. He had the joy that shepherd had in going out and finding the sheep, and bringing it home on his shoulders rejoicing. Now Jesus said, I am sharing My mission with you, and I want to share My joy with you.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" John 15:11.

Let me run through a statement on this:

"With unutterable love, Jesus welcomes His faithful ones to the joy of their Lord. The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls that have been saved by His agony and humiliation. And the redeemed will be

sharers in His joy, as they behold, among the blessed, those who have been won to Christ through their prayers, their labors, and their loving sacrifice" *Great Controversy*, page 647.

Friends, won't it be a wonderful joy? Yes. Someone you went to see. Someone you gave treatments to in the sanitarium. Someone you wrote a letter to. Someone you sacrificed for. Someone you prayed for day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. And they are there forever to enjoy eternity. Ah, friends, that is entering into the joy of the Lord.

"This joy all His followers are to share. However great and glorious hereafter, our reward is not all to be reserved for the time of final deliverance. Even here we are by faith to enter into the Saviour's joy" *Ministry of Healing*, page 504.

Yes, friends, we can have cups full of it. Gallons full of it. Barrels of it right here in this world. We can have the joy of sharing with Jesus in His mission and the thanksgiving which comes as we see souls responding to our united efforts. As Jesus and I work together there is joy again and again.

Sometimes tears? Sure. Heartbreaks as souls turn away? Yes. But joy as someone responds and comes into the circle of love. This is the real purpose of life. This is it. This is what Jesus was praying for. Are you in on it? If you are not, no wonder you are restless. No wonder you feel tempted to taste what Sodom and Babylon and Hollywood has.

But to those who have entered into the program of separation from the world, a mission of sacrificial service to the world, and the joy of Christ in the heart, the world looks mighty sick.

About four thousand years ago a man named Abraham lived in a great city in the valley of the Euphrates. Ur had a wonderful civilization. But one day God said, Come out, Abraham.

When Abraham got out he was under some oak trees over in Canaan living in tents. And if any of his old friends got over there and saw him they thought, What do you do when it rains? What do you do when it gets hot? What are you building for yourself?

But when you look into the record you find that Abraham was happy. He had accepted the principle of separation. He was on a mission, and he was entering into the joy of the Lord.

How many souls did Abraham win? At least a thousand. More than that. There were more than that who had accepted the message he bore in various places who gathered in his encampment to learn more of the way of life that he was teaching. Did it work? Oh, yes.

Abraham had a relative who decided upon a different program. He wasn't quite impressed with the principle of separation. He pitched his tent toward Sodom. See him a bit later and he has advanced. His family had gone modern. The idea of living in tents. My father can afford something better than that. If he can't, he had better get a move on him. We have got to keep up with the bright young folks down in Sodom.

Finally they moved in. Did Lot make a success? He became one of the judges. He sat at the gate. His daughters married well as the Sodomites thought. But how many converts did Lot get ready for the kingdom of God? Not one. When the angels of God went down to find ten righteous people in that city they couldn't find them.

Yet the Bible says Lot was a righteous man. He vexed his righteous soul day by day with the filthy conversation with the wicked. He allowed his family to carry toward and into Sodom. What did they want? The sights, the sounds, the styles of Sodom, and they got them.

Oh, my dear friends, which way are we going?

Imagine it. Do you suppose any relatives of Abraham and Sarah ever went back to Mamre to visit? I wonder how the children of Lot felt when they got out there? Can you see them turn up their nose at the children in Abraham's camp? Uncle Abraham, what a back number he is. I am so glad we don't have to live out there in that dump. There is nothing to see and no place to go. There is no place to fix our hair like we do down in Sodom. How in the world do you stand it?

Friends, are we going toward Sodom or away from Sodom? Do we like the way this world does? Do we want to look like Sodom?

Oh, no, we don't want to look that bad. We just want to look half that way.

It is not to smile. It is to weep between the porch and the altar and say, Spare Thy people.

These are some of the reasons why no latter rain falls. These are some of the reasons that Jesus still tarries. And while the Bridegroom tarries many slumber and sleep. God help us to arouse and awaken, and get on Abraham's program instead of Lot's.

What do you say? Do you think things at the camp of Abraham were different than down at Sodom? Do you think the young people looked different out under the oaks at Mamre than they did down in Sodom? Do you think they had a different way to enjoy themselves; a different way of acting and talking? I thank God for every young person who knows what I am talking about, and is happy in it.

I wish everyone was. You can be. I invite you to. I assure it is not living in a penitentiary. Oh, no. Sodom is the penitentiary.

"These things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves." And the joy of the Lord is not keeping up with the Jones's.

A word or two on the matter of money. I have been impressed that the Lord is impressing our leaders to come out with some very strong and clear things in the *Review and Herald* on this question. Did you notice the *Review and Herald* of February 4, by Elder Nichols, titled *A Trend Toward Luxuries*? Did you see his warning to Seventh-day Adventist not to be caught in this mania for gadgets? Read it. It tells that one of the well known makers of automatic washing machines is now offering a device costing twenty-five dollars that automatically switches off the dryer when the clothes are dry. The Wall Street Journal well observes that the idem would hardly be turned into a necessity.

You say, Brother Frazee, what is that about?

Read the article. It is so easy for the signs of the times to be fulfilling all around us, and we help fulfill them.

Take a more recent article in the *Review and Herald* of March 18. Here is an article on buying on the installment plan. It is labeled, *A Timely Problem for Seventh-day Adventist to Ponder*.

You say, What has that got to do with the members of the church?

Read it. Get the warning. The great majority of this world are bound hand in foot with this installment plan. And if something serious would happen in their personal lives the bottom would drop out of their finances. They would have to go into bankruptcy, or become slaves.

Not long ago a banker told me about a man who came in and wanted to borrow some money. The banker set down and the man had to show the banker that he was already committed for everything in his paycheck. Every dollar was spent before he got it, and he wanted to borrow some more.

You say, Everyone does that.

Not quite. Abraham doesn't do it. That's the way Sodom is run, but it is not the way Mamre is run. And if you don't have a live and an alert conscience on the bondage of debt and the sin of extravagance, read these articles by our church leaders. They have unburdened their hearts. It is one more facet of the question of whether we are going to be separate from the world and give our lives to the mission of finishing the work, or whether we are going to go on like Lot wishing things were different, but seeing ourselves and our families carried a little more toward the world. God help us. God pity us.

Is this prayer of Christ going to be answered? Yes, it is going to be answered. Every detail of it, because it is written:

"The prayer of Christ that His church may be one as He was one with His Father will finally be answered"  
*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 50.

Isn't that encouraging? Here is another text:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" Ephesians 5:25-27.

Is it going to happen? Oh, yes. There is going to be a unity of the church such as the world has not yet seen. Pentecost came as close to it as any other time in the past, but Pentecost is going to be repeated on a grander scale with a union closer than the early church every experienced.

Is God going to have a church that is sick of the world, and have nothing more to do with it? Oh, yes.

"Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times" *Great Controversy*, page 464.

It is coming. It is on the way, friends. You and I can share in it. But we will never get there going one mile North and two miles South. We will have to decide which way we are going and put all we have in that direction. Oh, let's enter into God's program of repentance, revival, reformation, the refreshing, and share the return of Jesus.

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