

## Teaching Points

As we continue through Christ's high priestly prayer, we're going to see Him reflect on His earthly ministry and pray for His disciples.

In verses 6-8, Jesus looks back on the time He's spent with the disciples over the past few years. 3 things stand out as highlights of His ministry to them:

1. He revealed the Father's name to them. ***"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world."*** (v. 6)

This is a summary of all that Jesus has taught them. In simple terms, He's taken the truth, power, and glory of the Father's name and demonstrated it to His disciples through preaching, teaching, miraculous signs, and personal fellowship with them. This is an echo of a statement made back in John 1:18, ***"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."*** One of the immeasurable blessings of Christ's Incarnation was the detailed report He brought of the Father.

2. He gave them the words of the Father. ***"For I have given to them the words which You have given Me..."*** (v. 8)

This too is an echo of previous statements from John's gospel. ***"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak."*** (John 12:49). The point is that Jesus spoke - not merely as a messenger from God - but as God Himself in the flesh. Everything Jesus said and did was in perfect lock-step with the Father - because Jesus is God. *There is no disagreement whatsoever between the Persons of the Godhead.*

3. He brought His disciples to faith. ***"... they have believed that You sent Me."*** (v. 8)

One of the major themes of John's gospel has been the gift of faith. Belief in Christ is not some personality trait that some people have and others don't. It's a work of sovereign grace performed by God. At this point, Jesus' disciples have come to believe in His divine mission. They understand, imperfectly yet sincerely, that Jesus is the true representative of the Father.

In all of these statements Jesus speaks with a sense of accomplishment. His ministry has been successful. He chose certain men and called them to follow Him. To these men He revealed the name and word of the Father. And to these men Christ gave the gift of faith. So far, so good. Jesus has fulfilled the Father's will in receiving and changing these men. **But then His prayer pivots to their being sent out.** In verses 9-19 He looks ahead to the ministry they are stepping into. And as He does so, he PRAYS for them.

Jesus is emphatic in His prayer: “**I pray for them**” (v.9). Think of how special this is for the disciples to hear Jesus pray to the Father for them. Although He is the Savior of the world (4:42), this prayer is not for the world, but for His disciples. They belong to the Son and to the Father. They are “gifts” given to the Son by the Father. Before they venture out on the ministry He has called them to, Jesus wants them to hear how He prays for them. His prayer reveals His heart for His disciples.

**Discussion Suggestion:** Identify the various things Jesus prays for His disciples in verses 9-19 and discuss their significance.

**Thoughts:**

*1. Jesus prays for their protection and their unity. (v.11)*

*This protection and unity are found in the name of God. In other words, their safety and well being are bound up in their relationship to the Father. He loves them and will keep them. Jesus intercedes for them in perfect harmony with these intentions of the Father.*

*2. Jesus prays for their joy to be full. (v 13)*

*As we see in the book of Acts, the ministries of the apostles was full of persecution and difficulty. But, Jesus prays that they will be able to carry out their assignments with joyful hearts. This is the same principle He showed them in His own suffering and enduring. See Hebrews 12:2.*

*3. Jesus prays for their protection from Satan. (v. 14)*

*God's protection here is understood in terms of preservation IN the world, not rescue OUT OF the world. So, Jesus desires that His followers will remain in the world He is departing. But He prays that they will be kept from the evil of Satan and unbelieving men. Suffering will mark their ministries - even so, they will not fall prey to Satan's malice. (See 1 John 5:18, Luke 22:31-32)*

*4. Jesus prays for their continued growth in holiness. (v. 17)*

*He has brought them to faith in Him. Now He prays that they will continue to grow in holiness. The direction of this progress is away from the world/unbelief and further into the holiness of God. And the means by which this sanctification will occur is the word of God itself. (Psalm 119:9-11)*

All of this depicts the intercessory work of Christ. This scene shows Him mediating on behalf of His disciples. This is not just a work He did that night. Nor is it a work that He just did for those immediate disciples at the table. It's a work that He still performs as He's seated at the right hand of the Father. He's there - and He's thinking of us and praying for us still. Be encouraged brothers and sisters.