

## **PP Signed, Sealed and Delivered**

6/15/2008

Text John 17:6-19

Illus ". . . while modern missions have led to an expansion of world Christianity, Christianity in North America has moved (or been moved) away from its position of dominance as it has experienced the loss of not only numbers but of power and influence within society" Darrel Gruder in Missional Church

Our text this morning is called the high priestly prayer of Jesus and it takes place in the upper room as He celebrated the Passover with His disciples just hours before He was crucified

He is just about to step out of that home toward the cross to die for our sins, and He is praying for His disciples, He is praying for all His disciples, including us today And He gives us in this prayer, an *unmistakable identity*, an *unshakeable security* and an *unchangeable responsibility*, summed up in signed, sealed and delivered

**PP** Three Great Teachings that are deeply relevant for all Christ's Disciples, and immediately applicable to the three groups we are praying for this morning

### **PP1-We Have Been Signed For**

***"I have manifested Your name to the people whom You gave Me out of the world. Yours they were, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything that You have given Me is from You. <sup>8</sup> For I have given them the words that You gave Me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from You; and they have believed that You sent me. <sup>9</sup> I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom You have given me, for they are Yours. <sup>10</sup> All mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them."***  
**(6-10)**

This is a prayer for those who are believers in Jesus Christ?

Those who have put their trust in Him that He is the only way to be saved for eternal life?

No other prophet, no religion, no methodology, no works, no sincere effort can save us

Only Jesus, Who died on the cross to pay for your sins and will take them away if you will come to Him, exclusively, and give Him your life

Those of us who have done that, Christ says here, are His

**PP 'the people whom you gave Me out of the world'**

**PP 'Yours they were, and You gave them to Me'**

**PP 'not praying for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours'**

**PP 'All mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine'**

It is God's signature, His name that underwrites our salvation

He has signed for us so to speak, and we belong now to Him, our Lord and Master

We have been given to Christ and He has signed for us in His own blood

There is a confidence and boldness we have as Christians knowing that we belong to God

This is our Christian Identity: that we are loved by God and belong to Him

**PP** *We have an unmistakable identity*

But there is another truth here that is astounding: **"I am glorified in them."**

What does this mean?

The answer, in part, is found in verse 4: ***"I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work You gave Me to do."***

The way His disciples glorify Him is to do the work He has assigned us to do

What is that work? Before we can answer that, let's look at our unshakeable security

***"And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given Me, that they may be one, even as We are one. <sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I kept them in Your name, which You have given Me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled."*** (11-12)

### **PP 2-God Has Sealed Us Into His Name**

Those that God has given to Christ, have a promise from the Father to keep them in His Name

Jesus guarded the disciples, kept them in God's Name, and now that He was about to die, He prayed that God would guard them in His name

God's name in the Old Testament denoted His character and power

**PP** ***"O God, save me, by your name, and vindicate me by your might."*** Psalm 54:1

**PP** ***"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe."*** Proverbs 18:10

Jesus Himself had guarded them, and had kept them safe, and lost none but Judas which Scripture had forewarned

This is shepherd terminology

The Scripture often speaks of God as the Shepherd Who watches over His people

The Gardener who cares for His vines

The Watchman who watches and protects the city

Those who belong to God are sealed within His protection and given the authority to undertake His mission

And like it or not-*and we need to learn to love it*-we are sealed together in the church

Jesus prays that God would keep them, seal them, and make them one

This is His prayer for us, it is His prayer for His churches that we would by His power, be kept in His name and brought into unity

Harry Ironside once wrote: *'You may be sure that whenever the Father gives any one to Jesus, He gives him for time and eternity. Such a one will never be lost.'*<sup>1</sup>

**PP** *We have an unshakeable security*

But there is another powerful truth I want to point out and it is seen in verses 13-19

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<sup>1</sup> James Montgomery Boice, The Gospel of John, p.1291

*“But now I am coming to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. <sup>14</sup>I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As You sent Me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sake I consecrate Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.” (13-19)*

### **PP 3-Christ Has Delivered Us To The World**

Jesus has *signed* for us, we are His, given to Him by God His Father  
The Father has *sealed* us, keeping us in His name, guarding us in His power  
And now He is *delivering* us to the world with the message of the Gospel

Illus On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was once a crude little life-saving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money and effort for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little life-saving station grew. Some of the members of the life-saving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. They replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now, the life-saving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely, because they used it as a sort of club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so they hired life-boat crews to do this work. The life-saving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration, and there was a symbolic life-boat in the room where the club initiations were held. About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boat loads of cold, wet and half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick and some of them had black skin and some had yellow skin. The beautiful new club was in chaos. So the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where victims of shipwreck could be cleaned up before coming inside. At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life-saving activities as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted upon life-saving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a life-saving station. But they were finally voted down and told that if they wanted to save lives of all the various kinds of people who were shipwrecked in those waters, they could begin their own life-saving station down the coast. They did. As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another life-saving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that sea coast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore. Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown.

Fellow believers in Jesus Christ, we cannot abandon the world  
Our Lord has signed for us, we belong to Him with an unmistakable identity  
He has sealed us, we are protected by Him with an unshakeable security  
**PP** And He has delivered us, we are on a mission for Him in an unchangeable

responsibility  
We are gospel-bearers to the world

We can't do if we *only* talk about and live out the gospel here in the safety of these walls

Kent Hughes once wrote that "*It is possible to go womb to tomb in a hermetically sealed container decorated with fish stickers.*"<sup>2</sup>

This is why we are spending the time and resources and energies to make a ministry to the needy on Monday evenings impactful  
Or why several women take the time every week to teach and love women who are in prison  
Any why some of our people are regularly sitting and loving those in nursing homes and sharing their testimonies in Jesus  
And why we aren't doing a traditional vacation Bible school this summer and instead going down town to where the children are  
And why we are organizing and sending nearly 100 people to three areas of our country to work and teach the gospel and serve the poor  
And why we have started Hunter's Heart ministry that will reach men and their sons with the gospel who will never walk through the doors of our church  
Any why we are absolutely thrilled when we hear how many of you, without the church programming it, are going to your neighbors, coworkers, peers with the message of Christ  
Its why Chris Bugyi, 11 years old, is organizing a graffiti cleanup crew to go out and assist the townships in taking care of a massive and growing graffiti problem  
His parents will make sure he understands that it is about something much deeper than Graffiti; it's about being sent into the world with the message of Jesus Christ  
Like several women in our church who decided to get involved with the Salvation Army because there are near unlimited needs and opportunities to display the gospel of Jesus Christ

***"As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."* (18)**

Notice the direction of this mission...*into the world*  
We cannot try to be the great American abomination any longer  
Churches are great at attractional ministry, where we create wonderful, attractive programs to draw the world to us  
But it doesn't work and it reverses the direction of Christ's prayer  
Yes our lives ought to attract, but as we live out our faith in the world, not on a subculture island of insulation from the world  
Jesus sent His first disciples into the world with the message of the gospel that was heard and seen through compassionate and powerful living and loving, and that mission has never changed in 2,000 years  
Friends, *we have an unchangeable responsibility*  
This morning, we affirm this mission in the lives of our high school graduates, our missionaries going to West Va., and Joel and Lauren Wildasin

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 403



