

**Life in His Name – Part 42**  
**How Firm a Foundation - John 17:6-19**  
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Intro:**

- This morning we are returning to the prayer of Jesus where He prays for the apostles. Before we turn to that passage, we are going to set it up from Ephsians where Paul describes the apostles, along with the prophets, as the foundation of the church.

**Eph 2:19-22 ESV**

**You are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**

- You are of the “household of God.” And this “house” is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself as the cornerstone. All the prophets lead to Christ, and all the apostles proceed from Christ. Their faith, deeds, and words, supernaturally empowered by the Holy Spirit and aligned to and built on Christ, are a firm foundation for your life and the church.
- Everyone and everything are built upon something, some philosophy, theology, purpose, or people. Whatever is being built, be it a person or a palace, must be built upon a solid foundation to withstand the test of time. The building we are in this morning is strong, built on a strong foundation, built with solid and reinforced concrete placed deep in the ground. You will have to dig really deep to find the true foundation this church is built upon—the prophets and the apostles and Jesus Christ—which no earthquake, wind, wave, or fire can move.
- After Jesus prayed for Himself, that the Father would glorify Him so He could glorify the Father, He prayed for His apostles, the foundation stones, who are the forefathers of our faith and the DNA of our family of faith, the church. I want you to understand who these men are, what is special about them, and what they are made of, which will give you great confidence in what they have written. I want you to understand what the greatest threat to these men was so that you can be aware of and on guard for the same danger. And I want you to know what they were called to and set aside for, so that you and I can continue in their mission.
- So, let’s talk about our foundation. I want you to know that our foundation is solid. Here is the next part of the prayer of Jesus, and let’s pay special attention to who these men are.

**Our foundation is solid**

**John 17:6-8 NIV**

**“I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.**

- *Jesus revealed the Father to them (6).* The apostles gained close and intimate knowledge of who the Father is through the Son. They had access to Jesus like no other group, giving them the clearest understanding of the Father.

- *The Father gave them to Jesus (6).* These men were personally selected for the role they were to play. They were not in these positions by happenstance, their choosing, but by the will of the Father.
- *They obeyed the word (6).* They did what they were instructed to do by the written word and the Word incarnate. They not only heard the word, but they also put it into practice with obedient faith.
- *They knew that Jesus had come from the Father (7).* They knew what and who Jesus was and that He came from the Father. They knew that the words, actions, and plans were all from the Father because Jesus and the Father are one. They knew that Jesus only said and did as the Father enabled and instructed, that Jesus was not there on His own accord or on His own behalf.
- *They were given the words of the Father, and they accepted them as such (8).* They equated the words of Jesus and the words of the Father. Both the Son and Father were pleased to give them their words.
- *They believed, without a doubt, that Jesus came from the Father (8).* This belief was firmly established, and nothing would take it away from them, even death itself, for they gave their lives for this truth down to the last man.

### **John 17:9-11a NIV**

**I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. 11 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you.**

- *They are prayed for by Christ (9).* They belong to Jesus, and Jesus asks of the Father for them because they are His. They are different from the world with special attention and purpose.
- *They glorify Christ (10).* The apostle's lives were dedicated to bringing glory to Christ. This was their primary aim and purpose. Not to bring glory to themselves or any other.
- These men were not playing around. They were committed, they believed, and they obeyed the word for the glory of God. They were unique in their role, special and solid. These were not a group of men who followed Jesus for their own sake, or to make a name for themselves, or to start a new religion. They told the truth and lived it.
- Next, we turn to the next request of Christ, that the apostles would be one and that their unity would be maintained from all threats.

### **Our foundation is unified**

### **John 17:11b-12 NIV**

**Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.**

- The goal of this prayer of protection is that they would be unified, that they would be one, as the Trinity is one. Notice that this prayer is not that they would be freed of danger or hardship, from lack or persecution, but this prayer is for protection from the greatest danger, that is, being lost from Christ and disconnected from one another.
- The protection comes from the “power of your name” which is the name of Jesus. The power of the name is that Jesus is the one who unites us and binds us together. We are one in His name.

This is the unifying and binding factor that spans all times, places, and people. We are in Him, and He is in us, and because of this, we are connected to each other. Jesus protected the apostles from falling away or falling apart while He was physically with them. Their flesh arose at times and threatened to break them apart and break them away. This tendency toward disunity continued after Jesus left and continues until this day. We must be vigilantly on guard against this and pray for our unity in Christ.

- There are two other factors that seek to destroy us and rob us of the full measure of joy. Jesus goes on to pray:

### **John 17:13-16 NIV**

**“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. 14 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. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.**

- The “full measure of joy” is seen in the complete family of God being unified and together. (Illustration of children home for Christmas. There is joy in the celebration, and the joy is full when everyone is together, with no one missing.)
- The Word of God is the dividing line between those who are in the world and those who are in the Word, as the Word is in them. The Word separates and divides and makes one different from the other, from those who believe and follow and those who disbelieve and disobey. And because of this, the world is at war with the Word and seeks to destroy it and those who follow, separating them from Christ and those who follow Him.
- The solution *is not* to completely remove ourselves from the world (as in cloistered groups), but as we will soon read, we were sent into the world. We are not to flee from the darkness but to bring the light of the Word to the world.
- The “evil one” works best in the darkness, the “lion looking to devour,” which is the third enemy. He does his greatest damage by separating us from Jesus and each other so he can devour.
- So, the two biggest threats to the apostles and us are to be divided from Christ and separated from one another. The three things that work to do this are our flesh, the world, and the devil. God helped the apostles to finish the race they were called to run in unity and in Christ, and God helps us to do the same as we keep close to Christ and are aware of the schemes that are in opposition to the Word and will of God, whether internal, external, or supernatural.
- The foundation upon which you have built your lives and what this church is built upon is solid and unified, and the last characteristic of our foundation stones is that they are pure.

### **Our foundation is pure**

### **John 17:17-19 NIV**

**Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. 19 For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.**

- When I use the word “pure,” I mean that Jesus prayed for them that they would be “consistent through and through” (which is what the word “integrity” means), that they would be completely of one substance, that which is of the Lord. This is what “sanctify” means. It is a process that “eliminates that which is incompatible with holiness” so that one is “set aside,

consecrated and dedicated” for the purposes of and in service to the Lord. We are made pure when we have been sifted by the truth, which is the word of God. The word of God works to transform our minds so that what is impure in us will be removed so we will understand and do the will of the Lord.

- If the apostles were impure, they would not be able to withstand the calling that Jesus had for them. They would crack under pressure because of flaws within their character, and everything that was built upon their work and testimony would fall as they fell.
- So the prayer of Jesus was that they would be sanctified by the word of truth so that they would represent Christ fully to the world and be sent to continue the mission and ministry of Christ in the world.
- Jesus was “made perfect” or “sanctified” (not that Jesus had any impurity that needed to be removed), and He proved that He was indeed fully sanctified by His obedience through suffering (see Hebrews 5:8-10). He was “proven” through suffering. Jesus set Himself aside for His mission as we are also to be set aside for our mission as we are purified by the word and our obedience to it, especially in and through suffering. Our sanctification is for our dedication to the service of God.

### **Conclusion**

- The foundation of our faith is solid, unified, and pure, built upon the prophets and apostles with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone. You can trust what is written is the Word of God. You can trust that it is true, communicated by those who were set aside to communicate the word by their writing and by their lives. This is the firm foundation of our faith, and you can be confident to build your life upon it.
- Continue to be aware of what builds and binds us together and what forces are at work to tear us from Christ and the family of faith. Keep committed to the mission of presenting Christ to the world so that people would see His goodness and glorify the Father.

### **Song: How Firm A Foundation**

#### **Benediction**

*May the Lord our God be with you, as He was with your fathers. May He not leave you or forsake you; may He incline your hearts to His, to walk in all His ways and to keep His commandments now and forever (1 Kings 8:57-58).*

#### **Questions for Growth Groups**

1. What in this message stood out and spoke to you?
2. What did you learn about the apostles that gives you confidence in Christ?
3. How have you seen people fall away from Christ and the church? What was their process, and how can you be aware of these influences on your life?