

Jesus' Petition for Our Sanctification

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We consider again Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17. In connection with that prayer, though, we read from Revelation 12. Revelation 12, and the woman in the chapter is the church, the church of Jesus Christ.

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. 4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5 And she brought forth a man child, [clearly there, a reference to the birth of Jesus Christ] who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. 7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. 13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. 14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished

for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. 15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Thus far we read in God's word in that place. I call your attention to John 17:14-19. Those are the words of our text. John 17:14-19. We find the words of Jesus as he addressed them in prayer to his Father,

14 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. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

As part of Jesus praying that we be preserved, beloved, Jesus also prays that we may be sanctified. We saw last time that Jesus prayed for our preservation and that in the verses just prior to the verses we consider tonight as our text. Jesus had prayed for our preservation. He prayed for that especially with these words, "Keep those whom thou hast given me. Preserve those that are mine."

We noticed, too, that God's preserving means our persevering. We persevere and that because God preserves us. To persevere means we do not give up. We continue and we persist all the way to the end but we persevere because God sovereignly and graciously preserves us. The relation between the two can be said to be that of cause and effect. The cause is God's preserving. The effect is our persevering. Or source and result. The source of our persevering is God's preservation, and the result is, of course then, our perseverance.

Notice now again that perseverance is a perseverance in faith and good works. We continue to believe. That's perseverance, we continue to believe despite doubts that come over against us; despite sins which rise up and accuse us; despite the devil who accuses us and seeks to tear down our faith. God preserves us so that we continue to believe.

But also we continue to do good works. That, too, is part of our perseverance. We continue to do good works despite temptations; despite sins; despite multiple failures and falls into sin. God continues to preserve us and we persevere in a life of good works.

Now both of those can be referred to as separate aspects or different aspects of our holiness, of our sanctification, our life as God's holy sanctified people, so perseverance,

then, is persevering in sanctification. That's what the perseverance of the saints is. It's not simply that we're maintained in some sense as God's children all the way to the end and then at last enter into heaven, but it is God's preserving us as his children who walk and live as his children in this world in lives of holiness all the way to the end, until at last we enter into heaven.

Preservation is being preserved in sanctification so it is not surprising, then, that in the context of praying for our preservation, Jesus prays also for our sanctification. That's, again, how we began our introduction, the first words of the sermon tonight as part, as part of his praying that we be preserved, Jesus also prays that we may be sanctified. This part of his prayer for our sanctification we consider this evening and we consider it under the theme "Jesus' Petition for Our Sanctification." Jesus' petition for our sanctification. First of all, a necessary petition. Secondly, a requested means. And thirdly, a holy goal. We'll speak of sanctification in some detail tonight but, first of all, just generally so that we understand what we're speaking of when we use the word "sanctification." Sanctification means living by faith a life of good works. Living a life of good works, simply put. That's sanctification. Sanctification means to behave in a holy way and if we behave in a holy way and we do and we will as God's children, but as we behave in a holy way, then we perform good works, for good works are holy activities. To live as God's holy people, that's to live as one who is sanctified.

Now, let's understand at the outset as we come to understand what Jesus is praying about when he speaks of sanctification, when he says sanctify them, he means to refer to a work of God. Sanctification, beloved, is a work of God and it is entirely a work of God. It is. Sanctification is not my work, not your work. It's not something that God leaves up to us and says, "That's your thing. That's your job. You must do this. I've done my part, now you must live a life of sanctification." Sanctification is not our cooperating with God so that God offers some help, some grace to us, and we as long as we cooperate with him, can live in a holy life. That's not sanctification, that's false doctrine.

Sanctification is entirely a work of God and that's exactly why Jesus comes to his Father and he prays to his Father, "Father, sanctify them, those whom thou hast given to me; those whom we both love; thy elect people. Sanctify them. They can't do it themselves. They can't do it on their own. They can't do it with anyone else helping them or working it in them or for them. It's thy work. Father, sanctify them."

Again, that must be understood very clearly. We may not think that the atoning work is the work of God. God sent Jesus to take our sins upon him, to become sin for us, to suffer for us, to atone for our sins, to take away our sins. That's a work of God while sanctification, on the other hand, is our work in response to that. That's not a complete or true way to understand or explain sanctification. Sanctification is certainly, in some respects, our response to what God has done, it involves a response from us, but it's altogether God's work.

It's God's work, God's work in which he moves us. He moves us mysteriously so that we are willing and active and obedient children of his. He does not move us as robots. He

does not move us so that we say with surprise suddenly, "Look, there's a good work that I've just done. Where did that come from?" Not such a thing, of course, but God works in us so that we're willing and so that we're knowledgeable and so that we're desirous of performing a good work and so that we actually do perform the good work as well, as God has done it in us, through us, by the power of his Spirit. In the final analysis, it is as the Scripture teaches, "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

So again, Jesus says, "Sanctify them, Father. That's my prayer." And what Jesus prays for, God gives us as answer to Jesus' petition. Jesus, of course, is a perfect Savior and so, too, whatever he prays for, he prays according to God's will. His prayers are always perfect prayers and always in harmony with God's will and, therefore, his prayers are always answered by God. As we hear him, then, in the text say, "Father, sanctify them," we can know God's answer is, "I will, I have, and I will always sanctify my people." We are, then, sanctified by God.

As part of God's preserving us, he sanctifies us. That means, in addition to what we've already said, that means that God works in us so that we are consecrated to him. Consecrated to God. Dedicated to God so that we begin in sanctification. We should out, too, sanctification is not something that's completed and perfected in this life, in principle it is complete and perfected in Jesus Christ, but as it is given to us and worked in us, it's not completed and perfect in this life, in fact, we've only a small beginning of this work within us. It will be completed in the day when God takes us from this life into glory. Then we will be entirely sanctified. Sanctification is a progressive thing but that sanctification which is progressive, which grows in the life of the child of God, is a sanctification of consecration to God. The one who sanctified, loves God, is devoted to God in God's cause, and obeys God from the heart willingly.

Sanctification means also separation. On the one hand consecration to God, which is at the same time a separation from all that is against God, all that is opposed to God. That's sanctification too. An antithetical separation from sin, unrepentant sinners, and all that stands opposed to God. As sanctified, we are saints, in the New Testament, God's favorite term for us. In the New Testament, saints, literally meaning holy ones. The holy ones of God, consecrated to God, separated from everything that opposes him.

Sanctification includes a renewal within us. We're not naturally sanctified. We're not sanctified as conceived or born, we're sanctified in principle, we begin to be sanctified in principle when God regenerates us. And then as God continues to work that regeneration in the broader sense out in our life, we become more and more renewed and we're renewed according to the very image of Jesus Christ. That's the glory of sanctification. We begin to be conformed or transformed, really, more and more into the image of the one who loved us and saved us and continues to work himself in grace in our lives.

So that then, sanctification also enables us to walk in all good works. We live out of the works which God has before ordained, which God has in eternity prepared for us. He grants them to us as his sovereign gift and we walk according to them in our life

willingly, cheerfully, and always by the grace of God. Fundamentally, sanctification is a deliverance. Again, by nature we are in bondage. Our will and our whole being is in bondage to sin. By nature we are slaves to sin so that all that we can do is sin; so that then, when God comes to us and begins to sanctify us, it's God beginning to break open the bonds of sin and the prison of the enslavement of sin and God begins to set us free, free from the absolute dominion of sin. And again, certainly in that old nature, sin still is there. The power of sin still exerts itself over against us, over against that new principle, that new life within us, and that new life has dominion and is God's final word with regard to us. We're set free in the power of God to serve God. That's true freedom. We're free to walk with God. We're free to serve God. We're free to live joyfully before God in loving service and obedience to him.

How necessary that work of God is. It's necessary for the glory of God as God has decreed it to be. It's necessary for the glory of God in this sense, that in order for God to reveal the fullness of his glory, the fullness of salvation, the fullness of his grace, the fullness of his greatness, he has decreed that he must sanctify his people, make them not only forgiven but make them also holy ones like unto himself.

Sanctification is necessary for the glory of God. Sanctification is also necessary for the fullness of our joy. In the context right in the middle of Christ speaking of our being preserved and Christ speaking of our being sanctified, he says the words of verse 13, "And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world," that means not only in all of his earthly ministry, that too but also even now he means as I pray and my disciples listen in. I speak these things in the world, these things of preservation, these things of sanctification, "that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." What joy that is to know we are sanctified and it's God's work and God will accomplish that work. God will glorify us in making us like unto his own, dear, holy Son.

But it's necessary from another point of view, this work of sanctification is necessary because we are so very weak. Christ knows our weakness, in fact, our absolute inability. He knows our need of God's sanctifying grace. He lived in this earth, he lived in the midst of his disciples. He knew his people well and their sin and their helplessness and their inability. Again, he prays to the Father, "Then, Father," as it were he says, "my disciples and all of my people, my whole church, are unable. They are weak. Sanctify them. They need that grace of sanctification."

But then also he knows our weakness and our inability in relation to our enemies and their strength. Sanctification involves a battle. Sanctification is always something that occurs over against opposition. Always, so long as it is something that occurs in this world. That's the way that sanctification occurs. Again, it's that old battle of the antithesis.

Beloved people of God, as God's holy ones, we are opposed by the world. Opposed because we are sanctified in principle and sanctified in part. Jesus brings that out in verse 14 and he says, "I have given them thy word," and then he says, "and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." What does

he mean in bringing up his giving to his disciples the word? He means, first of all, "I have given them that word and that word has transformed them, has sanctified them, has made them different and holy, and the world recognizes that difference and the world hates that difference and sets itself over against my own." But he means also, "I have given them that word so that they might go out into the world and witness of that word, and speak of that word, and testify of that word in the midst of this world which will expose the sin and the corruption of this world, which will only incite their hatred even more." Notice he brings that out in verse 18, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." And he sent them out, meaning the disciples, first of all, as apostles. He sent them out into the world with the word to testify of their Lord and Savior, to testify of their holy God, so that or as with the result that the world would hate them.

The text then speaks of that opposition against us as God's holy ones. Verse 14, Jesus says, "I have given them thy word," first of all, and then, "and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world." They are not worldly. They are not characterized as the world is. They are not filled with the values of the world. They don't walk in the ways of the world. They are not like the world. In fact, they are contrary to the world, therefore, the world hates them.

Then again, Jesus brings up the devil in verse 15, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil," meaning there the evil one, not evil in a real abstract general sense, but that personal evil one, the devil himself. "Keep them, Father, from the evil one, the evil one who would destroy them, who hates them, who hates all things holy and seeks to destroy thy holy ones."

Revelation 12 speaks of that great opposition throughout all of history. The reason we read that chapter is because it brings out the opposition of the devil, in particular, over against God's church. Verse 12 we read this after Jesus ascended up into heaven, here's the word with regard to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, those who are as members of the church, militant members of the church on the earth, "Woe to them, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." If we did not hear this prayer of Jesus, "Sanctify them," wouldn't that turn our hearts cold to hear the devil has great wrath directed against us? Exerts himself in all of his fury against us to destroy us and to turn us into those who are unholy? That's his great desire.

Verse 13 we read, "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." He persecuted the church, the holy church of God.

Verse 15, "And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." He poured tremendous lying deception out of his mouth, a whole flood of worldliness, using the world, using all the members and the institutions and the ungodly of the world as they propagate his lie over against God's holy church seeking to destroy her.

Then again, verse 17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed," and now revealed what he hates so much about them, they are described here as those "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." They are the ones who are holy. They are the ones who walk in God's commandments. And they are the ones who testify of the word of Jesus Christ. That, the devil hates.

We know that, too, by our own experience and if we don't, we hear the truth now, that the more we desire to walk in holiness and the more we strive to walk in holiness and the more that we confess the word of God and speak the truth of God's word and the whole counsel of that truth of the word of God, the more the devil rises up in his wrath against us and seeks to destroy that testimony and silence that word of God and tear us away from God's commandments and holiness. Again, what great comfort to hear Christ, "Sanctify them," and to know God's answer, "I have, I am, and I will, my Son."

We know the power of the devil and of the world. We know the hatred of the world and the devil, the pressure to conform. We feel that at times in our life. They put that pressure upon us in our life. Sometimes we sense that pressure even if it's not spoken. Anyone who has attended a college or university can speak of that. They sense the pressure to conform, to being unholy together with the unholy of this world. There is always that temptation to join with them; to abandon holiness and to run along in the quick pleasures of sin.

Then we have, in addition to the devil and the world and all the world as so many puppets of the devil serving his pleasure, we have also our own nature within us. Our own nature which is totally depraved, thoroughly corrupt, and delights itself in unholiness. Again, we need and we joyfully hear this prayer of our Lord and Savior, "Sanctify them, keep them from the evil one."

Notice too, beloved, that he prays for us in our unique situation. It says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world." He means to say, first of all, "I pray not, Father, that thou wilt take them unto heaven. If thou would take them unto heaven, then they would be kept from the evil one, then they would be kept from the hatred of the world, then they would be safe and secure in their holiness. I don't pray for that quite yet, I pray that they may remain in the world. I don't pray that they may either flee away in the world to some commune on their own." Jesus is not endorsing, in fact he's speaking against the concept of world flight. Jesus is not praying that we should live like the Amish or some strange cult, secluding ourselves from the society of this world and living in a very peculiar way. Jesus says, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world in that sense either, but even though they must remain in the world, the unique situation of my people is that they are not of the world. As not of the world, they must live in the world."

There is the difficulty of sanctification, one of the great difficulties of sanctification, anyway. There is the battle, a great part of the battle. "They are not of the world," Jesus says, and then adds for our comfort and joy, "even as I am not of the world." Again he

means as we hear him, overhear him praying unto his Father, he means to encourage us and to say to us, "Don't despair that you are an outcast, that you are a stranger, that you are most peculiar in the midst of this world and an object of hate. It was true, it is true even of me too. I'm not of this world any more than you are, my beloved people. And Father, they're not of this world any more than I am. We are thine yet they must live in this world as principally transformed only, Father, now as they live in the midst of this world but not of the world. Continue to transform them into my own image."

Included in his prayer for our sanctification, Jesus also requests that the Father use the means of sanctification. Sanctification is not immediate which means without the use of means. Sanctification is not immediate. Sanctification is mediate, it's something that God does. Remember we said sanctification is God's work. It's something that God works in his elect children in the midst of this world through the use of means. And Jesus identifies that means very plainly, he speaks of the truth. He speaks of the word of God. That's the means. Verse 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." The revelation of thyself in the word, that's the truth, that's the means whereby thy people will be sanctified. Again verse 19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Twice in the passage Jesus emphasizes the importance of the word of God, the importance of the truth of the word of God as the indispensable means that he requests of the Father be used for our sanctification.

The lie, the opposite of the truth. The lie, that's the means of the devil. It was from the very beginning when he came to Adam and Eve, in particular came to Eve and said, "You shall not surely die." He lied and what did that means result in? He used the means of the lie that resulted in unholiness. So it is always. The lie cannot sanctify. The lie has no power to transform God's people from sinners unto saints but it's the truth, the truth of the word of God.

God heard and answered that prayer of his Son. He had already given his church much of the word, much of the Scripture, but there was much yet to be given, much yet to be written, and so inspired holy men of old to write out the word of God, to write out the inspired Scriptures. He inspired those men by the power of the Spirit so that what they wrote was word-for-word the word of God. He raised up within the church those who would hear that word, read that word, study that word, and be given also the gifts and the calling to speak, to proclaim that word unto his people so that his saints could know from the Scriptures and by means of the preaching the word, the truth of God.

And that truth, first of all, a truth about God. A word, a truth which revealed God as he is. Independent, not in need of any man. Sovereign, absolutely free with the right to do whatever please him to do. God who is omnipotent, almighty, none can stay his hand or resist his power. A God who is also gracious, Scripture reveals. A God who in free and undeserved favor grants to his people full and complete salvation in Jesus Christ, his Son. A God who is longsuffering, patient, tender of mercy and boundless compassion. A God who at the same time will not pardon the guilty, the reprobate. A God who is holy. A God who requires the keeping of the law. And a God who has provided for his people all that they need in their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

A word which reveals not only the truth about God but also about all things as they stand in relation to God. A word of truth that sanctifies is a word that also reveals to us the world as this very passage does. Who is the world? What is the world? What's the principle of the world? How does it stand in relation to God and in relation to the child of God? The word reveals all of that. The word which sanctifies and that word which sanctifies reveals to God's people their great enemy, a mortal foe, the devil, that old serpent, and reveals to us that he will never have the victory; that his head is crushed by the Promised One, by the Lord Jesus Christ who has and always will have the victory.

The word reveals the truth with regard to us. It reveals that we're elected in eternity and not because of anything that God foresaw would be true of us, but simply because it pleased him. He elected us in grace and he forgave us. He sent his own Son to the cross to die for us so that all of our sins can be washed away and we be forgiven in Jesus Christ. He has granted us that powerful, mighty means of faith whereby we can know all these things and receive all of these things.

They reveal to us that we must not seek to be holy in order to take away our sin, in order for our sin to be removed, for he has already forgiven, he has already taken away all of our transgressions and our guilt and our sin. So he says to us now, "Be holy as those who are forgiven, as those who know that forgiveness by faith in your hearts. Be holy unto me as your privilege and as my calling to you."

Why does God use the word of truth as a means to sanctify his people? And again, that's by no means an exhaustive list, is it, of all the wonders that God reveals in his word to us, wonders which sanctify us? Why does God use the word of truth as means? Beloved, because it's powerful. Because it's the only means capable of sanctifying us. It's not a word that comes apart from the Spirit but it's a word which always comes with the Spirit and in the Spirit by the power of the Spirit, so that the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ accompanies that word, enters within us, and powerfully, effectually transforms us and sanctifies us to be holy ones of God.

And it's powerful, beloved, because it's God's own voice. God's voice is not like our voices. In some respects we could say there is a similarity, of course. Our voices can reveal things. God's voice reveals things but our voices have tremendous limitations. Our voices can effect nothing. We are powerless. God's voice always has an effect. Never returns unto him void. And as God's voice is proclaimed unto his own beloved people, those whom he has loved in eternity in Jesus Christ and those whom he has incorporated into his Son Jesus Christ and those within whom Christ lives, he speaks powerfully for their good. The powerful word of grace.

As he speaks, he enters into the depths of our hearts and we don't understand. We don't understand fully how that word comes into us and works within us. Again, it's a mysterious thing but God's word comes unto us in all of its power and all of its tremendous effectual grace and works in us mysteriously as rational, willing, active creatures and God makes us, causes us to be willing. Sweetly and powerfully bends our

wills, the Canons so well puts it, so that we desire to walk in holiness. We say, "I've heard the word of God, I've heard the voice of God. He has declared unto me all these things. I desire to be like unto him, my God and my Savior, and he is holy if he is anything."

And that voice then makes us not only willing but also makes us able. Tremendous privilege that God gives to us, his people. He doesn't give that to the ungodly of the world. They're not willing but they're not able either to walk in holiness before God. He makes us able to walk in holiness, able to live a life of good works, and then he causes us actively to do that as well. Mysterious. Wondrous. And an answer to the prayer of his own dear Son, "Sanctify them through thy truth, Father. Thy word is truth."

That prayer for our sanctification is Jesus' holy goal for us, beloved. It's how important this is to Jesus. It comes out in verse 19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." "Here's the purpose. Here's the goal," Jesus said, "that I have in all my life and in all my work, my goal is that my people be sanctified and sanctified through the truth, that the word and the truth may be seen to be glorious and mighty, irresistible in saving, that my people might be glorified." That's really what our sanctification is, it's our being made glorious, our being made to enjoy and share and partake of the very glory of God. And how great privilege to reflect that glory of God as mere creatures and yet to reflect that glory of our God. "That," Jesus says, "that's my goal. That's my ultimate goal." Of course he had purposes, many purposes, "but my great goal with regard to my people is that they may be glorified."

And again it does not say Jesus' great goal is the glory of God, of course that's true, Jesus' goal with regard to God was that God be glorified and God through him be seen to be the glorious God. But his goal with regard to us is that we be sanctified so that by our being sanctified, God might in turn be glorified. And Jesus does not say, "My goal in it all is that my people may be forgiven of all their sins," that's a goal, precious goal that is, wondrous goal that is, "that my people may have their sins taken away and may know they are forgiven and have peace with thee, Father, knowing that they're justified by faith and by faith alone in my work and my work alone. That's one of my great goals. But I have greater goal yet than that, that as they are forgiven and they know they're forgiven, they may live in holiness unto thee, Father, and be like thee, delivered of the bondage of sin, set free to live with thee, and to glorify thee now and forever."

So Jesus also reveals the holy goal for himself, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself." When Jesus says, "I sanctify myself," he does not mean, "I fight against my sins or I seek to make use of the word of God so that I might grow in holiness and my sin might be less." Jesus Christ was perfect. He was sinless. That's not what he meant. What he meant, the essence of what it means to be sanctified. He meant to be consecrated unto God. To be separated from all that is earthly and all that is in opposition to God. "I sanctify myself," he meant to say, "in all of my ministry and in the cross that lies on the morrow, the cross that stands before me the very next day. I sanctify myself by separating myself and standing opposed to all that is against thee, opposed to the devil, opposed to all the world, opposed to sin and death and all the rest, and I consecrate myself, Father, unto

thee. I dedicate myself to thee, to thy service, to laying down my life and my people might be in that way, sanctified, and taking my life up again as the risen Savior, that I might impart to them my Spirit through my word, my truth, and be used by thee in consecration to thee to sanctify my people. Father, sanctify them as the great goal that I have in my life and in my death and in my resurrection. Sanctify them, Father." And the Father's answer is known by us, isn't it, beloved? Only in part, in small part, but we are God's holy people. We're his church and his church is a holy church. Thank God and praise him for Jesus Christ for this prayer and for his gracious answer. Amen.

Father, we thank thee for thy word and thank thee for thy Son. What a dear and precious Savior he is unto us. How we need him in every regard and how great it is that thou hast heard his prayer and answered him in grace and worked through all the history of thy church a holiness in the hearts of thy people. Father, we pray and we know our Lord Jesus prays for us too even now as our Advocate, as our Intercessor. We pray too and join our prayers with his. Father, continue to sanctify us that we may be holy as thou art and as our Savior is. Amen.