

Follow the Leader – Transformed - John 17:1-23

“We pursue being a disciple making family: surrendered to Jesus, transformed by the gospel, and saturated in His word.”

As we dig deeper into this high priestly prayer of Jesus this week we see the heart of our Savior. As we shared last week this prayer is an opportunity to see Jesus conversing or communing with the Father. He prays for Himself, He prays for His disciples, and He prays for all believers. This week we unpack from this prayer what it means to be transformed by the gospel. His prayer provides the picture of why we should be surrendered to Him and what it will look like. The gospel is the message of God’s plan and work to rescue sinners from His just wrath and to reconcile them to himself through the work of Jesus Christ. Through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. This rescue offer is available to all who will turn from their sin and trust fully in Jesus. It is a gift from God.

Discussion Questions* -- *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. We realize that as we walk with Jesus after salvation that we should begin to look more like Him in character, concern, compassion, holiness, and mission. Growth in these areas may rise and fall from time to time but the result is we should look more like Christ than we did when we were first rescued. One of the most foundational and important ways that we are transformed is through the truth. The Word of God. Jesus prayed that the disciples will be set apart in God’s Word for His Word is truth. They had heard, received, and believed Jesus who had given them the truth. We will be transformed by the truth. Do you find it easier to read the Bible for knowledge instead of reading the Bible so that it can read you? Have you read Scripture just to keep up with religious and spiritual conversations more than reading the Bible for life change? What barriers do you experience in being consistent in Bible intake? How have you seen Bible intake lead to transformation in your life?
2. Jesus also prayed for the community of those who would believe, especially the disciples in this context. We can easily read Scripture and see that the disciples didn’t always get along and they were competing with one another at times for first spot. Transformation happens in community. We are not called to be uniform but unified around Jesus and the gospel. Our “common unity” is the rescue we experienced. To not be in community with other believers forfeits one of the very tools God uses through the Holy Spirit to transform us. In isolation we are not forced to deal with the differences, learn how to love through struggles, and be held accountable. Why is it so difficult to find and live in community? (i.e. unrealistic expectations, don’t like certain people, etc.). How have you avoided community and neglected to be one with other believers? What justification did

you use for this? How have you seen God use community in the past to help transform an area of your life to sanctify you?

3. Jesus sanctifies the disciples into service. They are to be set apart from evil but also sent forth into the world as He was in the world. He sent them on mission. He prayed for their protection from the evil one. He sends them into service. Once we have been rescued, the response should be to share this rescue with the world. Jesus is not praying that the disciples run from the world into the monastery like monks or into the desert like some groups of early believers. Transformation comes to the believer through service. We covered several levels of service today and pointed out that all service is good but not all service is equal. What ways have you been transformed by serving on mission? What hinders you from taking the next step in service? How does our motivation and heart for service play into this gospel transformation?
4. Jesus said the world hated the disciples because they, like He, were not of the world. Jesus prayed that His joy would be filled in them. Transformation also comes through struggle and suffering. We can experience struggle in mission and mission service that can shape us to look more like Christ. To trust God more than our own abilities or understanding. To humble us and to press into Him. How has God used struggle and difficulties in your life to sanctify you? What service are you involved in that God is using to shape you? James 1:2 tells us to “count it all joy my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.” Even though we don’t enjoy the struggle we can have joy that the struggle is shaping us. How can you rejoice today regardless of your struggle? What is God doing in your struggle right now that is shaping you into His image?