

Follow the Leader – Absolute Surrender - 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 surrendered to Jesus. His prayer provides the picture of why we should be surrendered to Him and what it will look like.

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

1. In verses 1-5 Jesus is praying for Himself. He is pointing out that the “hour has come” for Him to accomplish the work that He was given to do. Jesus even says he has accomplished this work. Even though He had not gone to the cross yet it is like it has already been done because there is no question that He will endure the suffering and agony. What comfort comes from the fact that God is intentional about all that He does? The life, death, burial, and resurrection were all a part of God’s sovereign plan. Does this help you to surrender to Jesus? Why or why not?
2. Jesus points out beginning in v.6 that He has manifested or made known the character or nature of God to His disciples. He goes on to say that His disciples have heard, received, believed, and kept God’s word. There was a surrender to Him as he gave them the word. Anyone surrendered to Jesus will allow their lives to be sifted through the word of God. How important is the word of God for those who desire to surrender to Him? Is it possible to even separate the two? Why do we find it so difficult to have a steady diet of the word? Has there ever been a time that you were more consistent in your time in the word? What changed? What was the impact?
3. Andrew Murray points out, *“Oh, we find the Christian life so difficult because we seek for God’s blessing while we live in our own will. We would be glad to live the Christian life according to our own liking.”* In verse 11 Jesus begins to pray for the protection of the disciples and that the Father would protect them and keep them in His name. He later prays that the Father would protect them from the evil one. Where have you seen believers be overcome by their own desire to live the Christian life according to their own liking instead of the will of God? Where do you tend to struggle with this the most? What strength comes from knowing that Jesus intercedes for us in this area?

4. In v.15 Jesus does not pray to remove them from the world but that the Father keeps them from the evil one. It is a reminder that there is a spiritual war going on and it is not against flesh and blood. Our total surrender should not only lead us to be set apart from sin but also set apart to mission. We are left in the world to do what Jesus did and manifest God's name and character. There is a tendency to separate and not engage with non-Christians. Jesus clearly shares the opposite. Much of our sanctification will come from carrying out this mission. Having to trust God in faith to accomplish what He desires us to do. V.18 reads, "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." Do you find this engagement with non-Christians for the glory of God to be difficult? How will this engagement sanctify us?