

May 13, 2018 Confirmation and Mothers' Day
"What Jesus Wants for You" Rev. Pat Weatherwax
John 17:6-19 NRSV

(Jesus prayed:)

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. *They were yours, and you gave them to me,* and they have kept your word. **7** Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; **8** for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that *I came from you;* and they have believed that you sent me. **9** I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. **10** All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and *I have been glorified* in them.

11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, *protect* them in your name that you have given me, so that *they may be one,* as we are one. **12** While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. **13** But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my *joy* made complete in themselves. **14** I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they *do not belong to the world,* just as I do not belong to the world. **15** I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.

16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. **17** Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. **18** As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them *into the world.* **19** And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

INTRODUCTION

A month or so ago I led one of the lessons with this year's confirmation class. It was one of the last learning sessions, called: "A Life of Faith". One of the illustrations was to describe the Christian life as the "two sides to a coin". One side is faith: what you know and believe. The other side is how you live out what you believe. Surrounding the two sides, the edge is God's love and grace.

The lectionary assigned text for today is John 17, which is called "Jesus' high priestly prayer". One commentator said we could base our faith on this one text and live by its instructions our whole life long. We could study this every day, to live a life of faith! This morning we celebrate our mothers and the 6 teens who are confirming their faith, but these words are for all people! First, what can we learn, know and believe?

KNOW THESE THINGS

You belong **to God** (v6- "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me"). Lots of things and people will try to influence you, but it's important to listen carefully. Not just who you are but whose you are.

Jesus **came from** God (v8= "know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me"). Believing that, that Jesus was sent from God to be the mediator and instigator of our salvation is what makes us Christians and "pilgrims walking" on a journey with God.

God **protects** us (v11= Jesus prayed: "Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one"). It's important to remember that nothing can separate us from God's love, if we are listening to God. But we can't just **hear** what God wants us to do, if we live that way. If we want God to protect us we need to make wise choices! And we won't know what God wants without prayer, Bible study and

listening. So there is the other side to the coin. We know, and we also do. John 17 also tells us important things to do.

DO THESE THINGS

Glorify God (v10= All "mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them".) The Westminster Catechism begins with the statement: "Our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy God forever".

Live in **Unity** (v11= Jesus prayed to God that his disciples "may be one, as we are one"). We are designed to be whole and better when united with Christ and with other Christ-followers, as closely as God is united with Christ.

Live in **Joy** (v13= "my joy made complete in them"). Even though Jesus' earthly life contained some sadness and violence, most of the time Jesus lived joyfully, surrounded by friends. St. Columba of Iona, 1500 years ago said "Joy is the echo of God's life in us." If you know it, show it!

Put God **Before the World** (v14= "they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world"). Our forever home is with God. Our priority is to honor God by choosing behavior that is honoring to God; and finally-

Make the World **Better** (v18= "As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world".) This church is a great place to be, but we don't live here. Jesus sends us to make our world more like God's ideal. Love God, love others. Be like Jesus; be determined to make this world a better place.

CONCLUSION

Any one of these points would make an excellent sermon or Bible study. None of us will be perfect in our walk with God, but we remember there are two sides to the coin of a Christian life: knowing, and doing. And it's all surrounded by God's grace. Thanks be to God! Let's pray.