

## Two Requests of the Lord to His Father

John 17: 11, 12, 20, 21.

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Verses 11, 12: "I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through [lit. in or by] Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as we. While [lit. when] I was with them in the world, I kept them\* in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept [lit. guarded], and none of [lit. no one out of] them is lost [lit. has perished], but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

Verses 20, 21 "Neither pray [lit. ask] I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

\*Jesus, besides being faithful as the responsible Master to His twelve apostles, had been thoughtful of the eleven in another way, even as of those to whom He had given title to become sons of God. (John 1: 12, 13.), This the son of perdition shared not, for he had not received the Lord. The eleven He had kept in the power of the name of His own Father. Now, He asks the Father to keep [treasure up] them in His own name.

BOTH of these *requests* are about *unity*.

The *first* request that as He the Son had preserved and guarded in His Father's name a people, through the days of His trial in humiliation [His Father had given them to Him] (v. 12), the Father should now keep them Himself according to what was involved in that name of the Father — My Father and your Father. When the Holy Spirit, promise of the Father, came down on Pentecost — gift of the Father through the Son (Acts 2: 33, 36), then the power and the instrumental means were evident; viz., the Holy Spirit's use of the apostles in testimony to the Lord Jesus, and working with it too. In the Galatian epistle we find, "Ye are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 26); and (Gal. 4: 4, 6) "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made [lit. become] of a woman, made [lit. become] under law, to redeem them that were under the law . . . that we might receive the adoption of sons [the adoption of sons; lit. son-place or sonship]. And because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This flowed out of the place the Son was in; and was by the Holy Spirit Himself who was, and is, Spirit of God and of Christ. (Rom, 8)

The expressions, "Holy Father, keep in Thine own name," "Whom I kept in thy name," put the relationship of the names of Father and Son very forward before the mind. It is the leading idea in the truth here presented. But *what* a way of putting it! that the reality of the relationship, right out from the heart and mind of the Father might be realized in us, "*that they may be one, as we.*"

The *second* contains another *unity*, and is "not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word," and here a visible result to be attained is stated, "That the world may believe that Thou didst send Me." The world cannot receive the Spirit of truth; for it sees Him not, nor knows [not having learnt or been taught of] Him. (John 14: 17.) Nor can it know [intuitively perceive] the things of God. (1 Cor. 2: 10-16.) The unity here is not as "in the name of *the Father*"

(name or manifestation supposed by the title "Father," as used by Jesus), and as true, fully so, to Him, but "as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." The mode of manifestation is here in question. There was and is essential union between the Father and the Son, besides that of ostensible relationship and full fellowship (true also of the Holy Spirit) in counsels, plans (as well as nature), in truth, affections, thoughts, in life, or being, and in principle, and hence indirectly in outward practice and walk; that "they may be one, as we."

How near the *unity* and fellowship (unqualified by any let or drawback) lay to the Lord's mind when making these two *requests* (referred to above) is proved by what follows. In those *requests* He had, as Son of Man and One in service representing the Father, and accomplishing His will — in full intelligence and fellowship with the Father, yet in thorough dependence and obedience — asked two things as having full liberty to do so. But then follows what shows a change. He does not *request* as One in service *requesting* of One on an equality with Himself (which would well become Him as the perfect Servant of God and the Father); but says, knowing right well that all His actings were in full accordance with the Father's mind:

Verses 22, 23. "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that [in order that] they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me."

*Unity* twice spoken of. By His having given to us the glory which the Father had given to Him, He showed His intention of all being shut in toward the end in His glory in perfect unity. When the millennial glory sets in, all that Christ is will shine into, and through us, as all that the Father is will shine unhindered into, and out through the Son; and this will make the Church, in that day, the vessel of the display through the Son of the Father's being and glory, *perfected in one!* And the world below *will know* that the Father sent the Son. The prince of this world, the god of this world, set aside as a usurper, and the Lord become the Father of an age (Isa. 9: 6), such will be the world's knowledge and acknowledgement (see Isa. 4: 4-6) as it looks up to the heavenly glory on high.

Wondrous addition made by the Lord to what He means to accomplish, "that the world *may know* that Thou hast . . . loved them as Thou hast loved Me." Yes, if we suffer with Him, we shall share His glory.

Secondly (which shows the fixedness of His mind about this unity) He adds:

Verse 24, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

Not only are we to share the highest of the given redemption and salvation-glory — such his love and purpose — but His own heart's desire is that His nearest and dearest friends, partakers of His sorrow, should behold Himself there in "the more excellent glory;" in glory, eye-witnesses of His majesty, and hearing the voice uttered in heaven to Him in the excellent glory — "This is my beloved Son, in whom I have found my delight." Our object of adoration and worship when we are peacefully beholding His place in the highest glory!

Thirdly, He adds in verse 26, confirmatory of fellowship with Him and the Father, as verse 25 is of our complete severance from the world through His grace:

Verse 26. "And I have declared [lit. made known] unto them Thy name [*i.e.* that which is Thy manifestation under that title of Father], and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

As the two preceding blessings are, in their full import, *for the time to come*, yet hope *now* lays hold of both of them; and, in one sense, the second is *open* to us, in that the Son is already in the Father and in His glory, yet in the *third* we have a portion for the wilderness all through it. No one has seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is [lit. He being] in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him [lit. told out in detail]. (John 1: 18), And again verse 14: "The word was made [lit. became] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld [contemplated] His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of [or with] the Father) full of grace and truth;" "and (v. 16) of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John could write of what he had known; have we no songs to sing while glorying in our God through our Lord Jesus Christ? (Rom. 5: 11) And what will it open into when we are with Himself above the Mount!