Set Apart and Sent

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[0:00] You guys may have seen this book kind of making a circuit in your news feeds or wherever you get your media. But Rod Dreher, senior editor of The American Conservative, recently published a book called The Benedict Option.

Any of you guys heard of that? Maybe I didn't. This is not a good. Steve's heard of it. You will hear about it if you haven't yet because it's making a pretty big splash. Even though he's a conservative writer, David Brooks, a New York Times columnist, said this is the most important religious book of the last decade.
And the reason why is that he argues in a provocative and compelling way that Christian belief and practice has begun to crumble in the U.S. and much the Western world.
And that's not really a new observation. But he proves that in a way that and calls for action. So what he's saying is that the attempt to preserve Christian faith through politics has failed.
Through popular culture, it has failed. And that he predicts that if we stay on this trajectory, Christianity as we know it will not exist anymore in a generation.
[1:11] And he says that in order to respond to that and also in anticipation of the increasing hostility that he predicts with legal restrictions or however the ability for Christians to practice openly their faith in public forums, he believes that Christians need to strategically withdraw from the world in order to basically shore up their faith in order to strengthen Christian discipleship.

Because as Christianity as it stands now is totally useless to the world is what he's saying. You need to strengthen the church in order for the church to do any good to the world. So that's his argument. So he's not calling for literal physical removal like Benedict who started the monastic movement.
But he's calling for some kind of strategic withdrawal so that we're not so inculcated in the culture in the popular world and the way the society is run. And they're able to strengthen discipleship and then from there go out to the world.
So this is making a big splash. And however, whether it's true or not, whether his prescription is accurate or not, we won't know until maybe another two decades to see what people do, how the church responds.
But some of the fundamental principles that he lays out are not new, right? It's, he's not the first one to come up with it. Benedict was not the first one to come up with it.
[2:42] It's in John 17. And he talks about in this passage how Jesus, and Jesus prays for us in this passage, but in his prayer he sets apart and sends his followers to bring all those who would believe into union with God.

This is what Jesus does in his prayer. He sets apart and then sends into the world his followers in order to bring all those who would believe into union with God. And Jesus' prayer is divided into three sections.
And the first is prayer for himself, prayer for the Son, and he prays for his glory. And then secondly, he prays for the apostles, his immediate disciples, the 12, and he prays for their sanctity.
And then finally, he prays for the church that will come to faith on account of the apostles' witness, and he prays for their unity. So the prayer for the Son, the apostles of the church, for glory, sanctity, and unity.
And Jesus begins by praying for himself because the fact that he is set apart and sent by the Father to glorify him is the reason why he's able to set apart and send his disciples to glorify him.
[3:48] And so verses 1 to 2, read it with me. Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

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So the hour of his glorification, which the whole book has been talking about, of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension, that hour, climactic hour has come. And that awareness doesn't lead Jesus to resignation, to faith.
It's like, well, it's here, so here I go. But no, he prays for it. He prays that God will do what he has intended to do. So glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you.
And then verse 2 explains how exactly Jesus intends to do this because he explains, Since you have given him authority over all flesh to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.
So the word since there is kind of an over-translation because it literally, the word is just, just as. That's the word. That's what it means.
[4:52] And that's how the NASB renders it. It says, Glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, even as you gave him authority over all flesh, that to all whom you have given him he may give eternal life.

So verse 2 is given there to clarify the relationship of the prayer in verse 1. That means the way Jesus prays for his glory is patterned after how the Father gave him authority in eternity past to impart eternal life to those who would believe in him.
And it's only because the Father in eternity past gave the Son authority to do this that he could impart eternal life. And in the same way that Jesus is now asking, just as, in that way, Now glorify me, he said to the Father, so that I can glorify you.
Because Jesus needs to be glorified, set apart, and display God's glory in order for the Father to be glorified. And so the Son asks for his glory, but it's not self-serving. The end of it is not his own glory, but the glory of the Father.
The Son is glorified in order to glorify the Father. And then verse 3 explains what this eternal life that he gives is. And this is eternal life that they know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
[6:08] Eternal life consists in knowing God, right? Because God alone has life in himself. All other life we see around us is derivative life, right? Only God has life in himself.

And so it's in knowing God, not just knowing about him, but knowing him personally, that we receive eternal life. And when we receive that life from him, when we know him, we see his glory.
Because you can't know him without seeing his glory. That's why Habakkuk 2.14 had prophesied, The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.
And because the Father sent Jesus as the ultimate revelation of himself, Only through Jesus can we see the Father's glory. And that's why he said, not only do we have to believe in the Father, But we need to believe in Jesus Christ whom he has sent.
And so it's by imparting eternal life that Jesus glorified the Father. And having faithfully done his work, he continues his prayer in verses 4 to 5. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.
[7:17] And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. And Jesus is, obviously, this is before his death.

But he has his death and resurrection in mind as he's already talking about the work that he's accomplished. And we know that because later he says, you know, I'm no longer in the world, Which is not entirely true because he's still in the world.
So he's speaking kind of in anticipation of all that will happen, what's about to happen. And so he's saying he accomplished the work that the Father gave him to do. And that includes his death, resurrection, the culmination of all that he's been doing.
And so Jesus has glorified the Father. And now he's asking him to restore him to the glory that he had with the Father before the world began.
And so that reveals to us what this glory that he's referring to is. Because in a real way, even though Jesus was the Son of God and Son of Man in his incarnation, when he took on human flesh and became man, he in a real way divested himself of divine glory.
[8:29] And because of that, he prays now that he would be returned to the eternal glory he had with the Father before the incarnation. So that's really what Paul talks about in Philippians 2, right?

Christ Jesus, even though he was in very nature God, he emptied himself, taking on the nature of a servant. Being made an appearance as a man, being found in human appearance, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on the cross.

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And then it says, Therefore, for that reason, God exalted him to the highest place. Bestowed on him the name that is above every name. And then the end of all of that is to the glory of God the Father, Philippians 2.11.
So we see that the exact prayer answered precisely in Paul's writing in Philippians 2. But this leads us to ask, what is glory?
Because we talk about glory quite a bit. And we always say as Christians, we need to glorify God. But we rarely talk about what it actually means. And because in one sense, of course, to glorify something just simply means to praise or honor something.
[9:41] And that is true. So Isaiah 42.8, God says, So glory and praise are in parallel construction.

So there is a sense in which to glorify someone means to praise and honor that person. But I think the word is used that way throughout the Bible because praising and honoring someone is an entailment.
It's an implication of glory. Not because it's in the core idea of glory itself. Because Jesus clearly says, you know, that he would praise that he would be returned to the glory he had with the Father before the world was created.
But if glory is simply the praise or honor that someone else bestows on someone, then he could not possibly have had glory before the world began. Because there's nothing to praise him and honor him.
And so that's the glory. So the idea of honoring and praising is an entailment of glory. But that's not in the definition of glory itself. Rather, I think we need to define glory in this way.
[10:46] And I think some other passages in Scripture give us a clue. Psalm 19, 1 says that the heavens declare the glory of God. And we might ask, how do the heavens declare the glory of God?

Paul says in Romans 1, 19 to 20, What can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made.
That's how the heavens declare the glory of God. They display his invisible attributes, his divine qualities, his power, his infinite perfections. So the glory of God really is the manifestation of his godness.
It's deity on display. That's what glory is. And so if that's the case, glory is unique to God. Only he is glorious in an intrinsic way, in a true way.
Everything else in the world, everyone else in the world only possess glory in a derivative way, insofar as they point and display God's glory. So when we look at a sunset and say, wow, that's a glorious sunset, we mean that it displays God's beauty.
[12:03] So when we look at a mountain range and say that, wow, that's a glorious mountain range, that means we're saying, no, that displays God's magnificence, his bigness, his largeness. When we say, you know, that a friend who lays down his life for a friend to save that person is a glorious man or a glorious woman, we say that because that person reflects God's sacrificial love.

When we say that a king is glorious, we're saying that he reflects and displays God's authority. Glory. So glory is always about God. And so he is really the only person that deserves glory from us and to be recognized.
So when we glorify him, then we're not really giving him anything he doesn't have. Rather, we're simply recognizing, acknowledging the glory that has always been his.
That's what we do when we glorify him. And so Jesus is asking for something that's staggering when he says, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.
That means he's saying that glory that the Father has is rightly his and has been his. He's saying, now return me to that glory. Now, this understanding of glory is confirmed in the following verse when Jesus transitions from praying for himself, for his glory, to praying for his followers and for their sanctity.
[13:26] So that's the second point, verse 6. He says, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were and you gave them to me and they have kept your word.

So he says he manifested his name to the people. That's the same thing as glorifying the Father. Because the name in Hebrew conception represents the entire character of the person. So to

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manifest God's name is to reveal his attributes, who he is, his glory.
So that's what Jesus did for his followers. We see this idea further in verses 11 and 12, if you want to read with me. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost, except the son of destruction, that the scripture might be fulfilled.
So this is how we know that he's praying here immediately for his 12 disciples. Because he mentions that he kept them all except for one, which is Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.
[14:36] And he kept them in God's name, he says, while he was with them. And because he knows he's leaving, he prays that the Father would continue to keep them in his name. And what does it mean to keep the word?

Because Jesus says that his disciples kept the Father's word. And the word, it's kind of a, that might be confusing to us, because the disciples don't even know what Jesus is going to do, right?
They don't even fully understand the significance of the cross, his death, and the resurrection. So what do you mean he kept your word? And then later he uses words, right?
The plural in verse 8. And those are actually two different words. So word in the singular is a different Greek word than the words in the plural in this passage.
And so the singular word throughout the Gospel of John refers to really the news, the person and work of Jesus Christ. The gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ. Jesus is himself the word, the incarnate, right?
[15:44] John 1, 1 said the word was with God, right? And the word was God. And, but words, plural here, just refers to his sayings, his teachings, his commands, right?

And so they kept the word, and that means they stayed with the Father. They stayed with Jesus. They aligned themselves unreservedly with Jesus.
That's what that means. Even though they were kind of, they're portrayed in this gospel as a bumbling set of disciples. They're making mistakes. They, you know, don't understand everything. But they did one thing right, and that's very commendable of them.
It's that when everyone else deserted Jesus, even after his controversial teachings, these disciples stayed with him. They aligned themselves with him. And that's what it means. They kept his word. And I hope that's encouraging to all of you, because for those who have not publicly aligned themselves with Jesus, this is an encouragement. And then, because it doesn't mean that you're ready to, you know everything about Jesus or everything he teaches.
[16:47] It doesn't mean that you're really going to get everything right right when you start to follow Jesus. No, it means that, you know, you're going to stumble. You're going to make mistakes. And you might even have doubts.

And you might even have fears. But you are committing unreservedly to follow him on that journey and saying that, you know what, no matter what happens, I'm going to stay with him, even though I know I'm going to fail, even though there are going to be difficulties.
And if you're ready to take that step, then you're ready to follow Jesus. And that's an encouragement for those who have not made that public profession to do so. And if you are a believer, this is an encouragement also, right?
Because as we grow closer to the Lord, we are more keenly aware of our weaknesses and failures, because we see God's perfect holiness in brighter light.
And as that happens, we can be discouraged. But we see, as Jesus says here of his disciples, they kept my word. If you're with Jesus and continue to go into him with all your struggles and sins, then he will say of you in the same way he said of his disciples, they kept my word.
[17:57] Now, this doesn't mean that Christian discipleship is easy, right? Or the expectations are not very high. It's very high, right? In fact, there's a world of difference, literally, between the rest of the world and believers.

In verses 6 to 7, Jesus says, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word, right?
So, as I mentioned, this refers immediately to the 12 disciples. But they are the representatives of the church. And you will see later, he's also praying this for those who believe on account of them.

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So, this applies to us as well. And Jesus is saying that in a real way, even before Jesus' ministry, these people belonged to the Father to begin with.
And so he gave them, the Father gave them to him. And because they were his, Jesus pursued them and saved them out of the world.
[19:00] Verses 9 to 10 make this contrast even sharper. Jesus says, I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.

All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. The syntax in the word and language is even more emphatic. It's just like, Not for the world, I pray, but for those you have given me.
Right? And the reason for this is that they are the fathers. Right? So, it's not that in John's construction, in John's theological framework, that his view of God's sovereign choice is so high, that praying for the world is really, you know, blasphemous.
Because the world is condemned. There's no hope for the world. There's only hope for those whom God gives out of the world. And he prays for those people. Right? So, that's the, And this is actually something that informs and stirs our evangelism, and our outreach toward people.
And the reason for that is that, because if you walk around the streets, and sometimes I see missing signs, maybe it's for a dog, or sometimes even worse, it's for your child. Right? Now, if it's not your child, if it's not your dog that's missing, right, then you might, you know, just pass by, not do anything about it.
[20:19] But imagine if that was your child, your dog on that thing, you would do everything in your power. You would use, exhaust all your resources, expend all your time and energy to find the missing child.

Because that's your child. So, that's Jesus' passion, his zeal for the lost, is that, you know, they belong to my Father, so I'm going to go and get them. Because He has given them to me, and they are my responsibility.
So, this doesn't prevent us from going out. Rather, it forces, it pushes us to go and to grab those people whom God has chosen and given. And for us, of course, Jesus had, He knew whom God had called.
We don't know that. So, for us, we go to everyone, and we pray, and follow the Spirit's leading. Who are the people whom you have given? And we minister to those people. Right? And this, and how do we know who's in the world, and whom the Father gave out of the world?
And that's, the dividing line will be drawn by the proclamation of the good news of Jesus. It says in verse 14, I have given them your word, and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world.
[21:29] Just as I am not of the world. Right? The difference in the response will be so stark that you can, the Scripture says that they will hate those who follow Jesus.

And you don't have to understand this primarily in an emotional way. They're going to hate you with an anger, or just that kind of hatred. Because the language of love and hate through our Scripture is covenantal language.
It refers to a settled opposition to God's will when it says that they will hate believers. And every unbeliever, everyone who is not given out of the world, do this.
They oppose the Lord, and in some way or another, they are minimizing God and marginalizing Him. And that is the hatred that He speaks of. And so, having distinguished, right, those whom the Father gave out of the world, and then, from the world itself, Jesus now proceeds to the crux of His petition for His followers, His apostles.
Verses 15 to 18. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.
[22:43] They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake, I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

And so, He prayed for His glory. Now, He prays for His disciples' sanctity. And so, it's not by mistake that He addresses His Father as Holy Father, because He's asking for His disciples' holiness.
And that holiness is enjoined to us precisely because God is holy. He's the one that is set apart or sanctified, which is really the literal definition of holy.

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And this holiness is kind of similar to glory. We think of holy as, you know, kind of doing the right things, doing God's will.
But really, at the basic level, holiness means that this person is set apart, distinct, different. So when the Bible describes God as holy, it's referring to His transcendence, that He is completely different from the rest of the world, the rest of creation.
[23:52] He's set apart. He's God. And that's really similar to, holiness is in the entailment of God's glory we talked about, because that's why in Isaiah 6, 3, the angels cry, Holy, holy is the Lord.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. And then it doesn't say the whole earth is full of His holiness. It says the whole earth is full of His glory. Now holiness, because God set apart His transcendence, His divinity, reveals His glory.
Holy, holy. And by extension then, because God is set apart, people and things that are set apart for God are also called holy because they're set apart and sacred, sanctified.
And so the Old Testament priests were sanctified or consecrated. The temple was called holy, set apart, sanctified. And so Jesus' prayer for them, sanctify them in the truth.
Your word is truth. Then is in substance the same as His prayer in verse 10, which said, keep them in your name which you have given me that they may be one even as we are one.
[24:57] Because Jesus is the word, right, the word of God incarnate. He's the one that displays the Father, reveals the Father, His name. And so He says, keep them in your name. Now sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Right? So He prays for sanctity for His believers. And this is a really important point, I think, for us to get, especially in this day and age. And I just, and I think this is the part of our calling that generally speaking, the younger generation, maybe people who were born in the early, you know, 1980s and later have a harder time adhering to, adhering to, that is being set apart and being distinct from the world.
But if we're Christians, then we are not of the world. We have to be set apart for God. And everything we do and say and think has to give evidence to the fact that we're not given to anyone else.
We belong to God. We're set apart for Him. Right? And maybe a few things that just examples that maybe we have a harder time reconciling this command with is your speech set apart for God.
[26:16] Right? Because Ephesians 4, 29 says, Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up as fits the occasion it may give grace to those who hear.

Is your speech always building people up? Always. Everything you say. giving grace to those who hear. Or is it characterized by corrupting talk, vulgarity, profanity, gossip, slander, thoughtless words that tear down people rather than building them up.
We'll have to give an account for every careless word we speak. Matthew 12, 36 says that. So if our speech, the way we speak, is indistinguishable from the way the world speaks, then there is a problem.
We're not set apart. How about the way we use our money? Jesus taught in Matthew 6, 21 that where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Where is your heart?
Where do you put your treasure and money? What portion of it goes to God's causes? To the church? To the poor? Does it go primarily to yourself?
[27:32] Your house, your car, your clothes, your food, your gadgets, your entertainment? If you're spending habits, as you look around your friends, unbelieving neighbors and friends, if you're spending habits are not distinguishable from your neighbors, the world, then there's something wrong with that.

It's not set apart for God. Your work and leisure. 2 Thessalonians 3, 11 warns of those who walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busy bodies.
Are you diligent in your workplaces? Do you work heartily as for the Lord and not for men? And how do you rest?
Is it characterized by idle surfing and indiscriminate media consumption? I'm not calling us to be legalistic, right?
But if the way we rest and the way we work is indistinguishable from the world, then we are not set apart for Him.
[28:41] And your attitudes, right, are they set apart for God? 1 Thessalonians 5, 16-18 says, Rejoice, always pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in

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Christ Jesus for you.

Is your attitude and posture at all times characterized by constant rejoicing, prayerful dependence on the Lord, and thanksgiving no matter the circumstance? or is it characterized by bitterness, cynicism, self-centered independence?
If our attitudes are indistinguishable from the world's, then we are not set apart, friend. So let's be honest with ourselves and I'm doing the same thing as I'm preaching this to you guys with myself. Are we sanctified? Are we set apart for God from the world, out of the world? And we'd be fools to think that we're impervious to the world's influence.
That's certainly not the case. And especially nowadays in the sense of, I don't know if you guys have seen Daniel Kahneman's book Thinking Fast and Slow. That's another one that's made of experience.
[29:50] It talks about how with the rise of behavioral sciences, people are able to predict not just our rational decisions but also our irrational decisions because irrational decisions are based on a predictable set of biases.

And so nowadays companies, governments, Amazon, Facebook, they all use these subconscious nudges to direct us in a certain way to buy us certain things. In fact, in a letter to shareholders, the Amazon CEO, Jeff Bezos, wrote that, boasted that they have 70 million of these subconscious nudges a week to get people to buy stuff.
and how, that's why he says, that's why this is the best place to sell your stuff because no one else has this. So we are fools if we think that we're not going to be influenced by the world.
We need to constantly be set ourselves, consecrate ourselves and be set apart to pursue him and to honor him and all that we do, be conformed not to the world, patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds.
That's the call to be set apart. And we can do this because Jesus is the one that consecrated himself. It's the same word as sanctify.
[31:00] He consecrated himself for us so we can be sanctified in truth. Now, having emphasized that part, the set apart, you would think that Jesus would pray, take them out of the world, keep them safe over here, but that's not what he prays.

So he says in verse 18, as you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
He says in verse 15, I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. Right? So Jesus decisively disarms the evil one, Satan, right?
And he defeats him so that he has no dominion over us. Right? But he's not powerless. He's still the ruler of this world. He's not the ruler over those who are in the kingdom of God.
Right? But he still has influence in this world. And God prays that he doesn't try to, he doesn't pray that we'd be extracted from the world, but that rather in the world we'd be protected from this evil influence.
[32:13] And what's remarkable is that we're sent in the same way that Jesus is sent. Right? Jesus describes himself in chapter 10, verse 36, as the one whom the Father consecrated, same word, and sent into the world.

And why was Jesus set apart and sent into the world? You guys, all of you guys know the answer to this question. John 3, 16, right? For God so loved the world that he gave his only son.
And the later verse John 3, 17, said God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. That's the reason why Jesus was set apart and sent.
And in the same way, that's why we are set apart and sent into the world to be agents of this good news, to bring salvation, to bear witness to Christ.
And those two things, we have to hold those two things together. Set apart, then sent, right? Because if you forfeit any of those things, neither one works. Because if we're not set apart from the world, then we're no good for the world.
[33:23] And that's exactly what Jesus talks about in Matthew 5 when he talks about the salt of the earth. What good is it if the salt loses its taste? It's useless except to be trampled on by men. If we don't look any different from the rest of the world, if we don't carry the scent of Christ in our daily living, then the world will look at us and judge that we have nothing to offer and they will be right.

We need to be set apart. But it's also no good for the world if we remain safely in the salt shaker, right? Nice, set apart salt in the salt shaker.

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No, like that popular evangelism book, out of the salt shaker and into the world. We need to go. We need to be applied to the world. So, and this part, I think, is the part of our Christian call that the older generation, so people born before the 1980s have harder time with.
It's not enough to be set apart. Generally speaking, I'm generalized. It's not enough to be set apart. We need to be sent into the world. So, if you think you have a great personal relationship with Jesus but you're not actively engaging with unbelievers, if you're not bearing witness to the world, then that's an anemic Christianity.
We have to be set apart to be sent in. So, let's not be a church that's satisfied with this little Christianity for you and me. Let's pray for the conversion of our friends and neighbors.
[35:02] Let's pray that we'll have baptisms for Easter Sunday coming up. pray for revival in East Cambridge. Every single great revival in the United States started here in Boston.

Let's pray for a third great awakening because Jesus said that we will do greater works than he did. so we are set apart from the world so that we can be sent into the world to bear witness.
And that's why Jesus also prays in his final phase of his prayer for those who will come to believe because he expects that people will come to believe on account of our witness, on account of the church's witness.
so verses 20 to 21. It says, I do not ask for these only but also for those who will believe in me through their word that they may all be one just as you father are in me and I in you that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.
so he prays for his glory now he prays for his disciples sanctity and now he prays for the future church's unity and they're all kind of integrally related right?
[36:25] It's different words but they're all really pointing to the same realities and the reason the purpose for this unity once again is so that the world may believe that God sent Jesus.

The unity much like the love for one another that Jesus said that by that people will know that you are my disciples John 13 35 in a similar way our unity is going to it's going to be so otherworldly so different from anything you see out in the world our unity will attest to the fact that Christ is the one that God sent and that we are his disciples.
Now this doesn't mean that we have to make you know doctrinal compromises in order to preserve a semblance of unity.
At times in history the church has done exactly this they sought unity at the expense of theological integrity and in doing so they undermined the very missional purpose of unity of bearing witness to Jesus.
So this is what happened in the 20th century with the ecumenical movement it had a great start ecumenism refers to a movement that tries to bring together churches from different traditions and denominations and saying let's be united together in serving God and that's wonderful right it's a great idea but it went awry when people started saying things like love unites but doctrine divides it went awry when they started trying to find the lowest possible common denominator that in fact they lost so much of the truth that they forfeited what the gospel itself and forgot what love itself is right because love according to 1 John 3 16 is by this we know love that Christ laid down his life for us that's how we know what love is and they couldn't even agree that Christ laid down his life for us but we are to seek unity among those who abide in the word of
[38:31] Christ as this passage is talking about that's why as a church we take time every Sunday to pray for other local churches that are centered around the gospel around Jesus and his word and as much as we and our unity among believers is so real it's not just an abstract thing it's so concrete so substantial that it's analogous to the very unity within the triune Godhead he says I do not ask for these only but also for those who believe in me through their word that they may all be one just as you father are in me and I in you that they also may be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me so this is Jesus said that he only did whatever he saw the father do that's how close the union was

Jesus only spoke and did the things that he heard the father say and do so he is saying that his prayer is that our union would also be perfected in such a way that we are one we have the same purpose to serve and to bear witness to Jesus and how do we attain this unity it's not by seeking to become more like each other it's by seeking to become more like Jesus and that's why Jesus continues in verses 22 to 23 read that with me the glory that you have given me I have given to them that they may be one even as we are one I when you go to symphony hall to watch or hear an orchestra play before they start there's always the oboe they're tuning but they're not trying to tune

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to each other that would be chaotic and it would take forever but instead they have the oboe play a single key concert
A and every other instrument tunes to that and the reason they do that is because the oboe becomes factory tuned doesn't go out of tune it's that's and so it's unchanging and that's the best way to attain unity in the same way we don't try to conform to each other try to accommodate everyone's you know different opinions and whims no we all seek to conform to Jesus and what he proclaims and what he embodies and as we're united around him that's the unity that we have that's the unity that Jesus speaks and Jesus is such a wonderful intercessor right like whenever you ask someone to pray for you right you want them to you know pray for the best right the possible thing you want them to pray with faith and you know you don't want them to you know just pray like oh just help them a little bit and you know like that's Jesus is the best intercessors because what he prays for here is incredible 24 to 26 and he's praying for us because we're the church that came to faith on account of the apostles witness so father
I desire that they also whom you have given me may be with me where I am to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world oh righteous father even though the world does not know you I know you and these know that you have sent me I made known to them your name and I will continue to make it known that the love with which you have loved me may be in them and I in them so Jesus says the father loved him from eternity past perfect eternal love with which the father loved the son he prays that that love would be in us he's praying that we'd be taken up into that very trying eternal love that's incredible love he's saying that the eternal glory that sets creator apart from creation would be imparted to us his creatures
God intends to make princes and princesses out of beasts he intends to make saints out of sinners he intends to make beloveds out of unlovable people he intends to turn the shamed ones into glorious ones and so the bible commentator D.A.
[43:22] Carson writes about this passage he says the thought is breathtakingly extravagant it is hard to imagine a more compelling evangelistic appeal brothers and sisters this is the glorious mission to which we are called to bring all who believe into union with God his eternal love offered to them so that's why Jesus sets us apart and then sends us into the world to bring them in and if you have not yet made a decision to believe in Jesus and follow him unreservedly never has there been a greater offer and a surer promise than what we see here so hesitate no longer be set apart for him so that you may be sent in to join this mission with Jesus let's pray together God we desire more than anything to see your glory fill the earth the knowledge of the glory of the

Lord to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea that is our desire and to that end we pray Lord that you continue to set us apart so that it will be so clear and evident to all those around us that we belong to one person and that's you Lord that all that we say and do all our plans the entirety of our lives are given to you so set us apart in such a way so that when we are sent in we may be effective witnesses able to give a reason for the hope that we have in you Lord use this church in that way in Jesus name we pray amen

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