

Lesson 27
Preparation For The Interregnum
Part V

When our Lord prayed for His disciples He prayed that they would be “one”. In what sense are we to understand that “oneness”?

I. The High Priestly Prayer for the Disciples

- a. The whole 17th chapter of John's Gospel is given to what has been called the **Holy of Holies** of the Scripture. It is the high point of our Lord's preparation of His disciples for the period of His absence from them.
- b. There are several points within this prayer which suggest that the present age in which we live is not the age of the Kingdom as some believe. For example, Christ clearly states that He will be **absent bodily**. John 17:11-12 *And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. KJV*
- c. His prayer contemplates a hostile world for His disciples which would be wholly **incompatible** if applied to that future glorious age when all nations will be under the reign of Christ with His glorified bride. John 17:14 *I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. KJV Ps 2:9-11 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. 10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. KJV*
- d. This prayer contemplates that the disciples will be living and working in the environment of the kingdom of the **Evil One**. Now the disciples are kept from the Evil One; in the Kingdom, the Evil One will be kept from them. John 17:15 *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. KJV*
- e. Our Lord prays for the spiritual oneness of all who will believe. This is made possible not through ecclesiastical joining together of denominations, but rather, through the gift of a **common** spiritual life on earth and shared glory in heaven. John 17:22 *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: KJV*
- f. This spiritual oneness, which Jesus mentioned **five times** within His High Priestly prayer, was in evidence on the day of Pentecost and continues to the present time in the sense that the spiritual life of the individual is rooted only in Christ. Acts 1:14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. KJV John 15:5 for without me ye can do nothing. KJV*
- g. Though doctrinal positions may divide denominations, this oneness of which Jesus speaks is found in the Unity of the Father and the Son - "that they also may be one IN US" – as it relates to matters of **Grace and Salvation**.
- h. His prayer is exclusively concerned with the **preparation** of a body which is to reign with Him in that blessed Kingdom in His glory and that they may share in that glory, and it is not for the heartbreaking problems of humanity in general. John 17:24 *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. KJV*

II. Our Lord's Final Claims to the Messianic Office

- a. Before the Sanhedrin and before Pilate, the testimony of Christ is **unwavering**. During His death trials He continued calmly to press, more clearly than ever before, His claim to be the Mediatorial King.
- b. In His examination by the Sanhedrin, where the charge was primarily religious in nature, the high priest placed Him under a **solemn oath** to answer whether or not He was the Christ, the Son of God. Matt 26:63 *But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. KJV*
- c. In that moment of time, if he should refuse to answer when he was thus **adjured**, they would charge him with contempt of the blessed name of God. Jesus' answer was simple and direct. Mark 14:62 *And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. KJV*
- d. This reference to Daniel's prophecy would absolutely seal His course to the cross. By use of this most unmistakable OT prophecy of His Messiahship, He reaffirms His **deity** before the high priest and the assembled tribunal. Dan 7:13-14 *I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. KJV*
- e. The high priest understood this **unmistakable** regal claim and rent his garments, signifying that the offense was beyond remedy, the harm had been done, judicially, a penalty was required. Thus, the tribunal called for a penalty of death. Matt 26:65-66 *Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. KJV*
- f. Before Pilate, the Roman governor, the Jews reshaped the charges against Christ to claim that He was a **political** enemy of Rome. Thus, ensuring that Pilate could not ignore these charges and would be forced to deal with Jesus accordingly. Luke 23:2 *And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. KJV*
- g. In the record of John's Gospel, the examination by Pilate consists of **three** questions by Pilate and three responses on the part of Christ. John 18:33-37 *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? 35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? 36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but*

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now is my kingdom not from hence. 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. KJV

- h. When asked whether He was the “King of the Jews”, Jesus queries Pilate as to whether this was his own **conclusion** or whether it was told him by the Jews. The reason for this is so that Jesus could answer the question specifically being asked. John 18:33-34 *Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? 34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?*
- i. If the source of the charge was Pilate, then it would be an entirely **political** question and nothing more. If Pilate is voicing the charge of the Jews then it is wholly different and must be answered differently.
- j. Asked from the perspective of the Jews, Jesus could not deny His Messiahship for in that case the kingship charge carried with it all the **implications** of the OT Mediatorial Kingdom and would have to be answered accordingly.
- k. The second question posed by Pilate scornfully disclaims any and all **responsibility** for the charges against Jesus. John 18:35 *Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?*
- l. Jesus then replies in a way that removes Himself as a **threat** against Rome. It was then clear to Pilate that Jesus posed no real danger to Roman rule and that He should be released. John 18:36 *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence*
- m. Pilate, intrigued by the notion that Jesus is a King of a Kingdom without any armed legion to support it, wanted further clarification from the mouth of Jesus as to whether or not Jesus identified Himself as a king in some **sense** of that word. John 18:37 *37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*
- n. Clearly, Pilate sees Jesus as no threat to Rome, but he has no **temperament** to delve into the profound philosophical and religious truths of this King and His Kingdom on trial before him. John 18:38 *Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. KJV*
- o. Our Lord’s consciousness of His own regal person and authority never wavered through the suffering and agonies of the crucifixion as exemplified by His throwing open the doors of **Paradise** to the thief on the cross. Luke 23:42-43 *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. KJV*

III. Interregnum Summary

- a. During the final days of our Lord’s ministry He prepared His disciples for the fact that He was going to be absent from them bodily but present with them **spiritually**.
- b. During this final period, our Lord emphasized to His disciples, through plainly spoken pronouncements and in parable form, the message of the **necessity** of His death and resurrection.
- c. In a new series of six parables, He also presented a **composite** picture of the Kingdom as something future in which He would reign in power and glory; promising a future Second Advent.
- d. He ensured that His disciples knew that their earthly ministry would take on a radical change from what they had experienced during His presence with them and that the **Holy Spirit** would also be present with them in the future.
- e. During this final period, our Lord introduced to His disciples the concept of the **Church** as a work in progress, a work which would take place during the interregnum.
- f. It was upon His entry into Jerusalem that Christ made His official and final offer **to Israel**: Receive Him as King and the Kingdom would come. Reject Him as King and judgment would fall upon them.
- g. After being rejected, Christ predicted the judgment of Israel and His Second Coming as two **separate** events. He promised His disciples that they would share in His future Kingdom.

IV. Application

- a. The High Priestly prayer of Christ places the believer in a oneness relationship with the Father and the Son. *John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: KJV*
- b. Think through what is implied by our oneness with the Father and the Son?
- c. In what ways do you frequently violate that oneness?
- d. What do you need to do when you recognize that you are violating that oneness?

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