

# They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world (ii) (Quality: Very good)

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[ 0 : 00 ]     and 17. The Gospel according to John chapter 17 verses 16 and 17. They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth.

Thy word is truth. This morning our attention was directed to the first of these verses.

And we endeavored to show the unity of the work of the Spirit in respect to the children of God as well as the Lord himself.

In just the same way as he was not of the world, so those that are born again, those that possess the Spirit of Christ, are not of the world in their outlook, in their faith, in their hope, in their love unto God.

Now in the next verse, the prayer of Jesus unto his Father is devoted to bringing about those manifestations that will make it very clear that the people of God are not of the world.

[ 1 : 44 ]     So, the prayer is, sanctify them through thy truth. In the chapter that we read this evening are these words, But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, and he also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

The Lord Jesus is speaking here unto his Father, seeking that his Father will truly bring about that which the Lord had already spoken of, sending the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Teacher, the Instructor, the Leader, the Sanctifier of the people of God.

In this verse, the mention is made of a method. Nothing, whatever it is, can be accomplished unless we have a method.

And that is particularly true in respect to all of God's works. They are done with a method.

One poet says his methods are sublime. And so they are. Now, the method which God uses in sanctifying in sanctifying those people that are elect of God, whose names are written in heaven, is through thy truth.

[ 3 : 53 ]     In other words, nothing will ever be accomplished in your soul or in mine apart from the method which God adopts and the means which God uses the Word of God.

Sanctify them through thy truth. Using the truth of the God, using the truth of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, we find that one very powerful work of the Spirit in his work of sanctification is to use that sword of the Spirit to disclose things that were not known before.

And hence we have the words for the Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

That teaching will have a separating influence. it will be truth revealed which cannot be revealed by man.

We may try and perhaps sometimes unwisely to discover the thoughts that we may see in our friends and yet will never be able sometimes to convince them of the error of their ways.

[ 5 : 59 ] A lot of time may be spent in an attempt to persuade. God may not spend hardly any time at all in sanctifying his people through the truth when this sword is used and cuts away with the sharpness of any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

the people of God are those that know their own sword are conscious of their own sin and the more they are conscious of their own sin the more they will be occupied with their own sin and have less time to find fault with others.

this is a great mystery naturally many may have a propensity because of a self-righteous spirit in themselves to see the faults of others now that will surely be a remarkable mark if God shows you your own weaknesses and remind you of that which is written let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall now this does not mean to say that we shall connive wickedness and that we shall excuse others but we shall be so occupied with our own sins and our own confessions that we shall have it in our hearts to pray for others that they may see by the teaching of

God where they may be wrong and God sometimes teaches his people in a very solemn way I remember a good man telling me some years ago now that when his boys grew up they cheeked him and he couldn't say a word because he only remembered too well that what his boys were doing to him he had done to his father and the situation was used as it were to bring home to him his own sin this did not mean to say that he would not have corrected his boys but he corrected them in a very different spirit he had to remember himself that he himself was weakness and what was in them was in them because of what he was and therefore a measure of patience had to be exercised and prayer unto

God too and furthermore there was a need of some forbearance sanctify sanctify them through thy truth now God has some strange ways of bringing about the truth you will remember the case of Elijah who after he had wonderfully been favored on Mount Carmel was in great trouble by the threatenings of a woman and he said this I'm no better than my fathers news of God in a remarkable way yet he had to come to this I'm no better than my fathers Paul may be said to use the same in a rather different way by the grace of God I am what I am sanctify them through thy truth now the truth of God will show us what it is to be born again and that will have a sanctifying power and influence upon us it will show us what regeneration is it is not just a change of thinking it is not going from one sect to another and following the ideas of this person and that but the truth of

[ 11 : 19 ] God will tell us that God's people are sanctified and set apart to know the solemn truth that regeneration means being born of the spirit regeneration means having a new nature and that nature is that which is of God sanctify them through thy truth having that nature will enable them to engage in many of those things that we mentioned this morning if we have only one nature then we shall not ever be distinguishable from the world it is because we have another nature which is divine which fears God all the day long which seeks after righteousness and holiness which finds it not a hard thing to confess sin and to seek for mercy and to plead the blood of Christ

I say that is not from our natural part with which we are born but it is that which is of God now the Lord's prayer is sanctify them through thy truth so that sanctification itself according to the Lord's prayer here will be by one method it will be by the truth of God it will be by the word of God and therefore we can come to the word of God in order to discover whether the Lord's prayer has been answered concerning us now has God set us apart you know the people of God have no need to set themselves apart because the world will set them apart and we shall become as speckled birds as the scripture speaks about it and we may well go through the world to a large extent with very few friends but if we are sanctified through the truth we shall also read this we are sojourners with thee and if we are sojourners with Christ then we have a friend which sticketh closer than a brother we value our friends but we should not be surprised if our friends were to let us down we should not be surprised if sometimes we should have wounds from our friends you remember that the word of prophecy says this what are those wounds in thy hands the wounds

I received in the house of my friends now it may well be but your friends had no desire to wound you but unwittingly they did and the wounds were in the hands but should it be so let us ever bear this in mind for our comfort they are not of the world even as I am not of the world and therefore as I receive wounds from my friends so may they receive wounds from their friends let us just take one example in the Lord's life the Lord Jesus was telling his disciples about his near decease and his crucifixion and Peter well meaning no doubt he said this shall not be unto thee but he was misguided and it was a wounding of the

Lord Jesus Christ we have a very similar matter in the case of Paul when he was traveling and there was trouble ahead and those that were with him did all that they could to dissuade him from going on his journey to Jerusalem but he speaks to them and he said would you make me sorry words to that effect and when they saw that they could not restrain him they said the will of the Lord be done they thought that by their demonstrations they would have saved him from trouble in the end but the working of the spirit in Paul and the spirit dwelling in Jesus Christ caused each to have their minds fixed and it was a wounding in both their hearts that

Satan should bring such a thought into the minds of others to dissuade them from that which they were persuaded was the purpose of God concerning them now you see sometimes we may be fully persuaded in respect to the Lord's will and purpose and yet there may be some of our friends with the best intentions that would try to dissuade us from taking a certain course it will be good if the Lord speaks as he did to Peter and as only he could speak get thee behind me Satan for thou saviour is not the things that be of God but the things that be of men the children of God are called to suffer in this world and their sufferings are of a varied kind sufferings which are not always mentioned and not always understood or thought about is when the spirit which is not of

[ 18 : 26 ] God is found a prominent in the hearts of even God's children when they seek to make a wrong observation in regard to that which God has spoken sanctify them through thy truth now tribulation and ye must through much tribulation enter the kingdom will have the desired effect and will be the answer to this prayer as well tribulation the children of God are separated by God by this work of tribulation now that is just not trouble trouble man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward so therefore what is tribulation if it is not trouble we may certainly say it is trouble but it is yes sanctified trouble specialized trouble trouble which has in it

God's method of sanctifying through thy truth in every age there has been a great deal of false religion as well as that which is real and sanctifying the people of God through the truth is a separating from all that is false in religion our flesh will cling to a false religion we will not be very willing to let it go but God will make his people distinctive in the world because of their pathway of tribulation their faith their graces their love their hope will all come under the powerful working of tribulation and there will be a very great sifting and when that sifting has been accomplished and completed we may well wonder as to whether we have any religion at all and so

God brings us into situations where our tempers are tried our patience is tried and we should ever remember this that every circumstance in the life of one that is called by grace is watched over by God there's nothing comes by chance and sometimes one of the hardest things to bear is the criticism from some that you're not right in what you do there are occasions when it may be true but is it according to the word of truth can we find that we have the backing of the scripture is our pathway a pathway of faith though we cannot clearly see the end of it are we persuaded that

God is leading us forth by the right way Peter speaks of the trial of faith think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you as though some strange thing has happened unto you but rather rejoice in that ye are partakers of the sufferings of Christ tribulation will bring us nearer to Christ and if we are numbered amongst those that are not of the world then we shall be brought nearer to Christ tribulation will be the means that God uses to wean us from the world to wean us from false religion and to bring us close to himself how important it is that we should be near to

Christ we can easily bring matters to a head by thinking of our dying moments where are we this evening you know it's a solemn thing to speak lightly of being far away from Christ of following him afar off is that the situation you would wish to be in when God called you hence we can get things into a right balance when we put our present feelings in the light of the last moments of our lives tribulation now this is as it were our religion which is threshed now you see that separates the chaff from the wheat that separates that which is of God from that which is of the flesh and we shall find that to be perfectly true and the word of

[ 24 : 30 ] God will support it indeed Jeremiah speaks to us about it when he refers to his word as being a hammer his word being a separator from the chaff of the chaff and the wheat a hammer something beaten out something which is as it were going through the upper of the millstone but remember that in all these things is the love of God sanctify them through thy truth how wonderful to know that we are the subjects of the spirit of the work of the spirit of God now tribulation will bring us to a holiness of mind let us not be confused with the wickedness of our deceitful hearts holiness of mind can be found in desires after

Christ to be more like him that I may know him and the power of his resurrection are desires expressing holiness to Christ now there is holiness in desire as well as holiness and enlargement the Lord Jesus Christ in his prayer prays this for all he does not pray it for some he does not say sanctify some of them through thy truth he does not say sanctify some of them through the pathway of tribulation but others will go in a different way in an easier way they will not be sifted we do not read that the other apostles were sifted as Peter was Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat that he may sift you as wheat but then were not the other apostles sifted as wheat what about the occasion when

James and John sought a high position one on the right hand and the other on the left of the Lord in his glory what was that but Satan working in those apostles sifting them as wheat trying to get some preeminent position in heaven it is not recorded just in the same way as it is for Peter's case but surely it is so and then we find Thomas here is one that was sifted as wheat when he said I will not believe unless I put my finger into the print of the nails and thrust my hand into his side he was being sifted as wheat as his faith was being sifted James and John's faith was being sifted Peter's faith was being sifted and what was the object they were being sanctified each of them through the truth to bring them to a certain spot and they all came to the same spot my

Lord and my God an acquaintance with the merciful God the compassionate God God who had laid down his life for their sins and knew what their sins were if we never came into the path of tribulation we shouldn't know half of what our sins are we do not know half now but we have learned in the pathway of tribulation and the pathway of temptation in that tribulation how Satan will tempt us to pride and to seek a place of eminence or to refuse to believe what the prophets have spoken how much pride is there in our hearts when an unbelieving heart pronounces certain verdicts upon certain things oh slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken what is our position this evening do you believe all that the prophets have spoken do you believe what the word of

God says sanctify them through thy truth because by this means God brings us to cry for mercy that is sanctification crying for mercy and hell will put you in this class they are not of the world you'll be an odd person if you cry for mercy the ungodly will not understand you the professing Christian will not understand you crying for mercy but this is the result of sanctifying them through thy truth now you are well aware of that truth which speaks to us about the publican who cried God be merciful to me a sinner now God had sanctified him through the truth because that man needed knew that he needed mercy and if we are sanctified through the truth this will be one thing that we shall know that we need mercy not just occasionally but mercy every day and then again we need mercy every day we shall see mercy every day it will be a mercy when we observe all the benefits which God loads upon us

[ 31 : 07 ] I often think more than I ever did of the wonderful mercies of God to me sanctify them through thy truth it is a viewing of light in God's light what do we deserve you see the world will give expression in no uncertain terms that they deserve everything doubtless you have heard their expression if the weather has been not to their liking what have I done to deserve this now those people whom God has chosen unto salvation will see everything that God says says as coming at the right time in the right quantity for the right purpose sanctify them through thy truth this sanctifying power of

God may work gradually but it will bring us eventually to leave things with God it's not part of us and part of God no it is leaving things with God and if we can leave things with God we shall see how perfect the ways of God are perhaps I can just explain it with this little illustration of the two farmers that sowed their seed and when one of the farmers looked at the other farmers harvest and saw it was better than his he couldn't understand it now these men appear to be godly people and the man one said well when I sowed my seed we wanted some rain I thought and so

I said Lord send some rain rain and then I said Lord send the sunshine but he said your crops are better than mine why is it well the other farmer simply said this well each day I said Lord send the weather which will be best and this is honouring God this is sanctifying them through thy truth and as we commence each day it will be good for us to be so blessed with a holiness of thought in viewing God in the perfection of his work that we should only look for God having done the best for us search all the world through examine and see what canst they'll find more suited to thee than this declaration in scripture expressed that

God thy salvation does all for the best now the sanctifying power of the spirit of God will be through the truth and it ill becomes us to look at some of the scriptures and because of our pride and unbelief to say well I don't believe it it hasn't been so with me well now if that is so you may have to look at this other verse again and ask well am I really amongst these people they are not of the world that's what the world says but it's not what the people of God should say and not what the people of God do say when they're under the power of the grace of God as for God his way is perfect so said the scriptures and these people that are joined to Christ sanctified by the Holy Ghost through the truth will come to believe that

God only does that which is good oh there's a need to be for everything a need to be for our trials a need to be for our afflictions a need to be for our adversities a need to be for our heaviness the apostle Peter mentions that in his first epistle where he speaks of the power of God and then goes on to say wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season if needs be ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations and the reason that the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be tried with fire might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of

[ 36 : 28 ] Jesus Christ whom having not seen ye love well now the people of God separated by the Lord prayed for in this verse they are not of the world why this is one point because whom having not seen ye love the world do not love Jesus Christ make no mistake about it and you have part of the world in you which does not love Jesus Christ but is there that in you which does love Jesus Christ whom having not seen ye love in whom though now ye see him not yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls so we come to the apostles words in the well known 8th of

Romans for we know we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to those who are the called according to his purpose now that is the position that is the we shall come to the confession that we shall make if we're in this first of these two verses they are not of the world the world says well things are just lopsided they're not working together for good they're not going according to my plan but the people of God under the power of grace will endorse the words of the scripture because they are sanctified through the very truth of that by the spirit of God for we know that all things work together for good to them that love God and to those who are the called according to his purpose God now what is our testimony is there anything in your life that hasn't worked together for your good some things have been very trying some things have been very humbling some things have pressed you down to the earth some things seem to have pressed the life out of your very soul but what's been the end of it what has been the conclusion of the whole matter

Christ has become precious you've had to cry for mercy you've had to seek for wisdom you've had to plead for compassion and when you felt that you've been so wrong in your judgment because your judgment has been so worldly you've had to come and say with David plead my cause plead my cause O Lord with them that strive against me now that striving can be from our own hearts the other part the natural part the carnal part plead my cause O Lord with them that strive with me fight against them that fight against me God is able to put down the simple propensities of our wicked heart let us remember those wonderful words in the last chapter of

Micah where the Lord inspires his prophet to put this who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity that passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage he retaineth not his anger because he delighteth in mercy he will turn again he will have compassion upon us he will subdue our iniquities and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea does God accomplish this has God the spirit sanctified your soul according to the Lord's prayer sanctify them through thy truth and the people of God will be a separated and sanctified people because they will know something of this great

God who is not to be compared with any other God or person who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity now what is your testimony you see if the pathway of tribulation and trial and temptation bring us to see our own vileness we shall know that there is no God like unto the God of Israel the God of Jacob the living God who pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage now this is not to be understood as just being overlooked this is not to be understood as God as it were winking the eye no the way in which God passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage is because that transgression is laid upon one that is mighty one that is able to save one that is able to engage in all that that will bring about an honorable pardon and furthermore will enable the almighty

[ 42 : 20 ] God to turn again and have compassion upon us compassion of God should not be confused with men's compassion the compassion of God is not influenced by bias or certain circumstances no God's compassion comes forth entirely from himself no oh house of Israel not for your sakes do I these things but for my holy name sake now that's why God will have compassion and that is why by the teaching of the spirit these people that are not of the world are taught that they have a God that is so different from any other gods he's different in his pardon he's different in the exercise of his love he's different in his manner of his correction and chastisement he's different in his turning again he's different when he instructs us and brings us up out of the horrible pit and out of the maury clay and sets our feet upon the rock he's different when he says oh Israel return unto the Lord thy God for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity

God is a God of truth and he will tell you the truth there will be no wrapping it up no covering part of it no saying well it's not so bad as you think God's teaching I believe this will make you feel that it's far worse than you can conceive but what does God say when your mouth is quite closed sanctify them to thy truth lead them to Jesus Christ show them that there is one that is willing and able to take their case in hand so he says take with you words and turn to the Lord and say unto him take away all iniquity and receive us graciously it's a wonderful blessing to feel that in approaching unto God we are approaching unto God held by the hand of our mediator take away all iniquity and receive us graciously now you know that

Jesus Christ will be accepted sanctify them through the truth that they know that Jesus Christ will be accepted and therefore if we are led in confession unto the throne of grace then in the presence of Jesus Christ we may come with all boldness into the Father's presence being fully persuaded that we shall be accepted sanctify them through thy truth concerning the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ now we shall need to know the truth if we are sinners of an advocate indeed we have already mentioned it plead my cause that is the work of an advocate to plead the cause but it is an honourable cause it is a cause wherein the Lord

Jesus himself lays himself open open in this way that he says I've laid down my life for my sheep my life and that life is a perfect life and therefore the sacrifice is a perfect sacrifice holy acceptable unto God which undoubtedly he felt to be a reasonable service a reasonable service is this not a melting consideration to think that God when he died upon Calvary dying for these people that are not of the world because they are separated by divine election are watched over throughout their lives are instructed by the

Holy Ghost and are made to feel their need of a saviour by heard heard it's good than in