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THE SACERDOTAL PRAYER

An Exegetico-Doctrinal Study

A Thesis presented to the

Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Divinity

by

Wesley J. Kuhn

Concordia Seminary

May 1, 1948

Approved by:

John Theodore Mueller
Alexander Guebert

THE BAPTIST TRADITION

(Outline)

Controlling Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to make a reasonably thorough exegetical and doctrinal study of the Catechetical Prayer.

I. Introduction

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- A. Historical
- B. Nature and scope of this tradition.

II. The Exegetical Study

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- B. Cosmology
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- D. Pneumatology
- E. Eschatology
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III. Conclusion

THE SACERDOTAL PRAYER**(Outline)**

Controlling Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to make a reasonably thorough exegetical and doctrinal study of the Sacerdotal Prayer.

- I. Introduction
 - A. Historic evaluations of the Prayer.
 - B. Nature and scope of this treatise.

- II. The Exegetical Study
 - A. Part One: Verses 1 - 5: Christ's Prayer for Himself.
(Translation, textual criticism, word study, grammar and syntax, meaning of each verse.)
 - B. Part Two: Verses 6 - 19: Christ's Prayer for His Disciples.
(Same pattern as under A.)
 - C. Part Three: Verses 20 - 26: Christ's Prayer for Future Disciples. (Same pattern as under A.)
 - D. Summary

- III. The Doctrinal Study
 - A. Bibliology
 - B. Theology Proper
 - C. Cosmology
 - D. Christology
 - E. Soteriology
 - F. Eschatology
 - G. Summary

- IV. Conclusion

THE SACERDOTAL PRAYER

Introduction

David Chytraeus, a disciple of Melancthon, and one of the six theologians who in 1576 prepared the Book of Concord for publication, was the first to designate the seventeenth chapter of John as the Sacerdotal Prayer. Godet comments, "This is indeed the act of the High Priest of mankind, who begins His sacrifice by offering Himself to God with all His people, present and future."¹ Luther says, "That is the sum and purpose of this chapter, that after a good sermon should follow a good prayer."² And Melancthon states, "No more worthy, no more holy, no more hallowing, no more sublime voice has ever been heard on earth than this prayer of the Son of God Himself."³ Augustine has acclaimed the prayer as the holy of holies of Scripture. Other evaluations of this chapter run the gamut of praise from theologians and Bible scholars of all ages. After a careful reading of the chapter it easily takes its place as the grandest chapter of all Scripture.

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1. N. M. Ylvisaker, "John 17:20-24" in Theological Quarterly, (1915), p.230.
 2. Martin Luther, Saemtliche Schriften, Achter Band, col. 747.
 3. P. F. Schlottman, "Das hochpriestliche Gebet Jesu und sein Anwendung auf unsere kirchliche Arbeit," Synodal Bericht des California und Nevada Distrikts, 1919, p. 13.

The purpose of this treatise is to set forth the original text of the chapter, to translate and explain it, verse by verse, according to accepted exegetical practice and to survey thoroughly the doctrinal content of the chapter, in accordance with the principles of biblical theology. It will be the writer's task to stand aside and let the matchless truths of Scripture unfold from these simple yet almost unfathomable words of the Son of God. Since the conclusions in the paper are that of a youthful pastor, they may be understood as the product of theological thinking still in its formulative stage. Throughout the exegetical section an effort has been made to analyze the interpretation of the better commentators and to reach a soundly evangelical and Scriptural meaning. On the basis of this meaning the conclusions in the doctrinal section have been predicated.

The scope of this paper embraces simply the entire contents of the twenty-six verses of the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel according to Saint John. The present paper is presented as a reasonably thorough exegetical and doctrinal study of the Sacramental Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The topic was suggested by a remark in an exegetical class during the study of Saint John's Gospel. Born amid the routine of classroom life, it has grown and now reaches maturity among the diversified experiences of the parish ministry. Interruptions of shorter and longer duration have enabled the writer to reflect carefully upon the work and to review its progress as the various liturgical seasons of the church year passed by. The first section has already been presented to a pastoral conference of which the writer is a member, and he desires to express his thanks to these brethren for their constructive

criticism. Nor can this introduction close without an expression of gratitude for the invaluable assistance and counsel of the sainted Doctor Louis Fuerbringer, who made suggestions regarding research material and its reliability. May the God of all grace grant His blessing upon these humble efforts to the glory of His name and the increase of the kingdom of His Son, the God-man Christ Jesus, who promised, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."⁴

Ascension Day, 1948

4. Matthew 28:20

The Exegetical Study

Part One: Verses 1-5: Christ's Prayer for Himself

Verse 1:

"Jesus spoke these words and raising his eyes toward heaven, he said; Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son that the son may glorify you."

The Textus Receptus has a finite verb in place of the participial form of ἔπαρέω in this verse, but the majority of better manuscripts favor the participle construction,⁵ Similarly these better manuscripts omit the καὶ following ἔρα as we have in our translation,

ἔλάλησεν from λάλέω --to say words, clearly indicating that this is the report of an eye-witness.

ἔρχεται from ἔρχομαι --comes; the perfect of the verb conveys the meaning of a present continuing condition; has come, is come, is here

ἡρᾶ --hour, time; the meaning of the word is more striking and forceful, if we use the word hour. It is the hour appointed for the glorification.

πάτερ --father; here the nominative usurps the place of the vocative,

ἔρα --in order that; introduces a purpose clause.

δοξάσαι from δοξάζω --glorify; effective imperative aorist.

⁵ Critical notations are adapted from The Expositor's Greek New Testament, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll; for explanation see Introduction, pp. 52-57, Vol. I.

Luther always renders δοξάζω with verklaeren, probably following the Vulgate. Verklaeren means transfigure, but he should have used verherrlichen to glorify. Goodspeed's use of "do honor" to translate the verb dilutes the force of the original. Tholuck rightly asserts that the choice of the word here refers to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father, participating in the divine majesty and sovereignty.⁶

Meaning of the verse:

In this opening verse John lifts the veil which throughout most of Christ's life had obscured the relationship between the Father and the Son. He gives us an insight into the intimacy of this divine relationship, as the eternal Son of God who has voluntarily laid aside the pristine glory which He possessed and enjoyed with the Father, and came to earth to redeem mankind, speaks directly to His Father, as a man to God, asking for the glory that belongs to God alone, which He had possessed before He became a man. Godet correctly interprets this as follows: He asks not for moral perfection for His suffering, not for His power of attraction, which He henceforth would exercise on men, not the enjoyment of divine happiness and glory, but an increase of personal power for restoration to the possession of the divine omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience--needed to glorify God.⁷

Dods believes that the tenses and verbs employed here indicate that this prayer followed closely the previous discourse and was uttered within the hearing of the disciples. He discredits the conclusion that since Jesus raised his eyes to heaven He doubtless was outside.⁸

6. Augustus Tholuck, Commentary on the Gospel of John, p. 73.

7. F. Godet, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John, p. 197.

8. Marcus Dods, The Expositor's Greek New Testament, I, p. 840.

Likewise Meyer, who says, "The eye of one who prays is on all occasions raised toward heaven."⁹ Hengstenberg, however, believes on the basis of other evidence that Jesus was outside, admitting that the words here need not necessarily imply it, but assuming that Jesus left the chamber after He had spoken the words that conclude chapter fourteen.¹⁰

The use of the third person in this prayer of Christ's is not unusual. His address to God as Father serves to show the closeness which He felt to the heavenly Father as He was about to fulfill the prophecies of the ancient servants of God and once for all depose Satan from his dominion over the hearts and minds of men.

Jesus predicates His prayer for glorification on the statement "The hour is come." Truly it was H-hour on the timetable of heaven. It was the hour for which the faithful of the Old Testament had prayed and hoped. It was the hour that spelt doom for the forces of evil and victory for the legions of righteousness. It was that hour on which hinged the eternal salvation of children of God.

When Jesus addresses His Father, He calls Himself God's Son. Throughout His earthly ministry we know that He usually referred to Himself as the Son of Man. Here, however, when He speaks not with men but with God, He clearly identifies Himself as the Son of God.

Once again we observe, as in chapter thirteen verse 31 and 32, that the glorification of the Father and Son is a condition of reciprocity. "Now is the son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself and shall straightway glorify Him." Thus it is a reciprocal condition

9. Ibid.

10. E. W. Hengstenberg, Das Evangelium des Heiligen Johannes, p. 145.

showing the intimate communion which exists between Jesus and the Father, and the impossibility of divorcing the Father from the Son without destroying entirely the true teaching of the Godhead. When the Son, through His suffering and death on the cross for all men, would bring to men a knowledge of the unbounded mercies of God the Father, then men would glorify God which is the object of Christ's work.

Luther explains this verse:

False idol worship is the antithesis of giving glory to God. Such worship exists today and shows the need that God be made known through the Gospel. Christ makes it clear that He is the only man who can bring proper glory to God. Where there is no Christ there can be no right knowledge or worship of the true God. Summa, wer Gott sucht, oder dienen will anders, denn in dem Christo, der findet und dient nicht dem rechten Gott. ¹¹

Verse 2:

"Even as you have given him authority over all flesh, that to all those whom you have given him, he may give eternal life."

Textual criticism unnecessary here.

ἐξουσία --authority, power; this power or authority embraces πᾶσιν ἄνθρωποις the entire animate world, specifically man. The kingdom of power is meant with the kingdom of grace implied. The Hebrew equivalent of this expression is גִּבּוֹרֵי-כָּל. It indicates the entire human race. ¹² It denotes the whole of humanity in its imperfection.

11. Luther, op. cit., col. 754.

12. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 146.

Robertson states that καὶ οὖν has almost the force of a causal particle. 13

καὶ οὖν --all who; a neuter, hence more universal and still individual in meaning. The expression with the article is used in the collective general sense. It designates the future body of believers, the unity spoken of in verse 23, John 11:52 and in Ephesians 2:14.

Meaning of the verse:

"Even as you have given him authority over all flesh." For the benefit of His disciples and all future believers, the Savior compresses into words the deepest mysteries of His relationship to His Father. We may agree with Robertson that the opening word is causal or merely designed to introduce a corresponding thought. Hangstenberg believes the causal idea should be relegated to the background.

Jesus follows His request for the restoration of His glory with the statement that the Father has given Him authority or power over all flesh. This echoes Matthew 28:18, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."

The Father gave this authority, complete power over the entire human race, to Christ when He became a man. In His humility, Jesus was the Lord of all men. Paul epitomizes Christ's authority with "He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave him to be head over all things." 14

13. A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 963.
14. Ephesians 1:22.

"That to all those whom you have given him." Here Jesus speaks of the whole company of believers: the una sancta ecclesia. The familiar words of John 3:16 lie hidden between the lines of this verse.

The ἵνα introduces a purpose clause indicating the aim of the authority given Jesus. Robertson finds here an anacoluthon, while others as Lenski, Dods, and Keil, believe it is an absolute. Regardless, it is plain that the Savior refers to the believers as a whole, since the Father gave Him them at one time, as a whole number of the elect, even though today in the twentieth century some of them have not been born. Jesus and God the Father as well as the Spirit, knew from eternity who would be saved. The ἀνθρώπων shows that the individuals are known and recognized.

"He may give eternal life." Eternal life spoken of here can only refer to the sphere of life beyond the grave. It is the life which for the apostles lies in the future. Luther says "Such power over all living beings and to give eternal life does not belong to a created being. They indeed can take and receive it but the authority to give it belongs to God alone. Even the angels, themselves possessors of such life, cannot share it with others." 15

The verb give emphasizes with relentless force the fact that God saves man alone by grace. That eternal life is purely and completely a gift of His unmerited love. We see here that Christ has already broadened the scope of His prayer. Beginning with Himself He now turns to His faithful followers, showing that the reason He

15. Luther, op. cit., col. 759.

has asked for His glory is that He may distribute its effect --
eternal life -- to His faithful followers.

Verse 3:

"Now this is the eternal life, that they know you as the only
true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

MS. D: (Beza) adds εἰς τὸν κόσμον --into the world....
at the end of this verse. Although D is generally reliable it would be
unwise to accept it here since all of the other manuscripts omit this
phrase:

ἵνα γινώσκωτε from γινώσκω --that they know - Westcott
finds here the ghost of a purpose clause,
stating that the hina expresses an aim, an end,
and not only a fact. Then the hina clause
adds the idea, as compared with the τὸ γινώσκειν
of effort or aim at acquiring knowledge of God.¹⁶
Robertson believes that this is the appositional
use of hina, not an infrequent construction,
placing the clause in opposition to the sub-
stantive.¹⁷ Numm agrees with Robertson.

γινώσκωτε --knows; in the sense of recognize or perceive.
German: erkennen

ἰδιότροπος --sincere, faithful, true, genuine, authentic.
It is the attribute of God (Revelations 6:10)
and therefore also of Christ, John 3:7 and 19:11.

16. James Moulton, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, p. 206.
17. Robertson, op. cit., p. 992.

ἀποστέλλει from ἀποστέλλω --to send on a mission, as an apostle or ambassador. Whenever this verb is used for the sending of Jesus through God it is employed in an affirmative proposition.

Meaning of the verse:

"And this is eternal life." Although these words are plain, men have deliberately stooped to misinterpret them thereby denying the deity of Christ. Schlottman writes "Eternal life is an existence with God in all eternityto recognize him as creator and preserver of all things, to love Him as the highest good, to trust in Him, to praise Him and prize Him, that is eternal life." 18

Christ elaborates upon the meaning of that strange term, eternal life. What does it embrace? Eternity is an incomprehensible to the mind of mortal man as is the trinity. In His statement Jesus uses the word is, meaning that what follows is a description, not that it leads to, tends toward, but this is eternal life. He describes its reception and possession, that is, the nature of eternal life.

Vincent sees here eternal life as not only knowledge but a pursuit of that knowledge. There must be a continuing, progressive perception of God in Christ.¹⁹

Tholuck rightly forbids the modern practice of assuming a metonymy here. To know God is life in itself. As Zwingli says, and here we may well apply his words without hesitation, "By as much more do we know God in Christ, by so much more do we live."

18. Schlottmann, op. cit., p. 16.

19. Marvin Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament, II, p. 263.

"That they know you as the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."

These words are not merely the definition of the reception of eternal life, but the declaration of its nature.

The only true God....does this exclude Jesus from the Godhead? By no means, for this passage distinguishes the true God from all false gods, I Corinthians 8:5,6. It was by making known to them this God, and then glorifying the Father, that Christ gave men eternal life. To the knowledge of the Father must be added the knowledge of Him, whom the Father sent, namely, Jesus Christ.²⁰

This Erkenntnis (perception, knowledge, apprehension) of God has its beginning in this life, but in its full truth it belongs to life beyond the grave. Only there and then will God appear as He is in reality, I John 3:2. Only then and there will we know as we are known, I Corinthians 13:12. Thus the nature of eternal life is at once the way to eternal life.

Hand in hand with uóros goes 2 theiós. One serves to reinforce the other. Because He is the only one, He is also the true God and because He is the true God, He is the only one.²¹

This term 2 theiós shows that this God alone perfectly answers to the idea expressed by the word, God.

Luther remarks on this verse as follows:

Thus, here stands the clear enlightened words which everyone can receive and grasp: Christ

20. Dds, op. cit., p. 841.

21. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 149.

gives eternal life to all those who believe. Since, however, no one can give eternal life except God alone, it must incontrovertibly follow that Christ is the true and genuine God. Therefore, since he grounds eternal life upon that premise, that a person must know him together with the Father, that without his knowledge no one may attain eternal life, thus that the knowledge is single by which he and the Father are known, so he must have one existence and nature with the Father, that is, even being the same genuine God, yet a different person from the father.²²

Thus verse three brings a correlation of the two previous ideas, glorifying God and eternal life. When Jesus prayed these words aloud. He indicated that He knew He was the only one through whom His apostles could be saved. He used His name Jesus Christ to show that now the disciples were free to proclaim Him as the Christ. Before this time He strictly forbade their publishing that news about Him.

Westcott finds difficulty in accepting that the Savior would name himself as Jesus Christ, and prefers to believe that John has given us merely the substance of Christ's speech. Without doing violence to our teaching of inspiration we might conceivably admit this possibility, but it is an unnecessary concession, and could lead to doubt or misgivings as to the authenticity of the account before us. We know from other Scriptural passages, for example, Matthew 11:27, that Jesus often spoke of Himself in the third person. There is no compelling reason demanding that we accept the theory that John was restating in His own words a summary of what Christ said. All evidence rather points to this being rather a

22. Luther, op. cit., col. 759.

verbatim account of Christ's prayer, given to John by the Holy Spirit and doubtless He himself remembered most of the prayer from memory. It is highly unlikely that John would quickly forget the noblest prayer he ever heard.

Finally, the significance of the two names of the Son of God should be considered. Jesus means "Savior", referring to the work He had come on earth to accomplish, that is, to redeem the world from its sins and reconcile it to God. Here Jesus boldly claims for Himself the title Messiah, the Christ. He assumes the position of that Redeemer, that promised Savior, for whom the Jewish people had waited almost twenty centuries.

Verse 4:

"I have glorified you on earth by completing the work which you gave me to do."

Textual criticism is inconsequential.

τετέλεσται from τετέλειω --finish, complete, bring to an end or completion. Jesus speaks of things in the future as though they had already happened. The same idea is brought out in the τετέλεσται --"it is finished" of the cross; having been finished, perfectly accomplished.

ἐργον --work; all of the redemptive plan in which the Father and the Son cooperated are included in this word, work.

Robertson notes that there is an emphatic sentence structure

here, with the use of personal pronouns.²³

Meaning of the verse:

Here is the revelation of the Father and the Son. The Father reveals the Son, Christ, and thereby reveals Himself, and when Christ is revealed, He reveals the Father. Christ's and Father's revelation are inseparably linked and bound together. The one accompanies the other.

The immediate thought here is of necessary progress which the hour demanded. There was no longer reason for continuing on earth. Jesus neither desired nor needed any prolongation of life below. His work was to make known the name and nature of the Father. That is now accomplished. The eleven know the Father. Philip's request, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us" was answered with "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." 24

We can see in this verse that while Christ was concerned entirely with man's welfare, namely, to redeem the world, yet His work involved a higher purpose, that of glorifying God. The use of the verb "give" which recurs again and again indicates how Christ viewed this work. He did not think of it as a burden but as a loving gift to Him on the part of the Father.

"I have glorified you on earth." Jesus points out that His whole life has been one that has brought glory to the Father. His life was irreproachable, and the purpose of His life would have an ennobling effect of the Father's name upon men. We need not be

23. Robertson, op. cit., p. 418.

24. John 14: 8, 9.

alarmed at the change of person. Here Jesus speaks intimately with His heavenly Father, that Father who said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."²⁵ When Jesus revealed to men the true nature of the heavenly Father, showing His justice and grace, His will and His mercy, then there was real occasion for men to glorify God in heaven.

"By completing the work which you gave me to do" or "having brought to completion the work which you gave me that I should do it."

"The work" summarizes the entire life of Christ, its purpose and result. This verse synthesizes the thoughts of verses 2 and 3. Hengstenberg believes that the work was fulfilled now by anticipation, but it was not fulfilled or completed in reality until He said, "It is finished" on the cross.²⁶

Jesus had succeeded in His undertaking. What was it? The objective justification of the world, the work of reconciliation, II Corinthians 5:18-21, Colossians 1:18-21. In this phrase we find a compact expression of the entire redemptive program. Christ willingly accepted his part in the great plan as a gift from the Father. Without grudging or without reluctance He followed it through to completion. His prayer indicates later that as a man He had a human will -- did not therefore desire suffering, torture and death, but as Son of God He said staunchly, "Not my will but thine be done." He knew that the Father's will was also His own

25. Matthew 3:17.

26. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 152.

will in eternity, and His own will even then as the true God. So certain is Christ of the completion of His work that He speaks of it as a past occurrence.²⁷

Verse 5:

"And now, Father, you glorify me at your own side with the glory which I had with you by your side before the world existed."

πατέρ is replaced by πατέρ in B, but this is better unchanged.

σί has ί in place of ή but the majority of better manuscripts have the latter form.

The dative is accounted for by attraction, whereas the grammatical form should be accusative, ί.

παρά --beside, at your side, by your side. To translate "with" simply does not convey fully the meaning of the preposition employed here. παρά brings out the full sense of the relationship of God and Christ. Christ is coequal with the Father.

παρά Πατρί --can only mean "in communion with the Father in the spiritual kingdom, in heaven."²⁸

Here the word πατέρ is vocative in form and usage. Other vocatives are found in verses 21, 24, 25.

27. Cf. Philippians 2:7 and II Corinthians 8:9.
28. Tholuck, op. cit., p. 389.

Meaning of the verse:

The former glory of which Jesus speaks here is different from that mentioned in John 1:14. A contrast between ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς of verse 4 and πρὸς τὸν πατέρα which stands for ἐν οὐρανῷ. It is just to demand that the Father glorify the Son since the Son has glorified Him. The glory for which Jesus asks is not the glory that shone forth in His miracles and words. A preview of this heavenly glory He asks for was seen at His transfiguration. Christ refers here to the πρὸς τὸν πατέρα which He laid aside when He became a man and entered the state of humiliation.²⁹

Godet correctly states that Schilling's conclusion that the humiliation of Jesus began at creation is exegetically untenable.³⁰ Keil says that θεός is the whole person of Jesus Christ, not merely His human nature. These words transcend all human understanding.³¹

Even as the Father willed that Christ disavow His heavenly glory, lay it aside and become a man, so He willed the return of Christ to heaven, the restoration of that former glory which they both had before creation, that is, in eternity and which Christ had voluntarily shed when He became man. Jesus is not, however, requesting a reward for His work, as some allege, but a restoration of what He had before, His divine glory, in heaven. Thus, the meaning of δοξάζω becomes ever clearer as the prayer progresses. It expresses a relation possible only between the persons of the Godhead. The first phrase indicating a return to the Father, and

29. Philippians 2:6.

30. Godet, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

31. Carl Friedrich Keil, Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes, p. 508.

the second, of the former eternal presence with the Father.³²

Christ never did forsake His divine glory. He merely veiled it for a time, during His earthly life. Now He prays for that glory to be restored according to His human nature.

32. R. C. H. Lenski, Interpretation of St. John's Gospel, p. 1125.

Meaning of the verse:

The division we employ here, following Lenski, Hengstenberg, Tholuck and others is the same used in modern translations. Luther and Kretzmann make the division: verses 1 to 8 and then verses 9 to 19. Our division gives verses 6 to 10 for the motivation for the prayer for the Eleven and verses 11 to 19 the intercessory petitions themselves.

Turning to His disciples in this prayer, the Savior pours out His heart in their behalf. How these words must have sounded the depths of the souls of the disciples. Christ utters here His divine love, profound as it is, for these men with whom He had associated. Jesus proceeds to lay before His Father all the loving thoughts He has about these chosen vessels of His, men who would be the foundation of the Christian Church through their lives and work.

Particularizing in the "work" which he had come to perform, the Savior mentions that He has revealed God to these disciples of His. Instead of saying "you" He says "your name". God's name is the sum of His essence and attributes. Thus He had revealed the whole glory of God to those whom the Father had given Him. He has taught them by word and deed, by precept and example, by miracles without number, by His whole self, personality, character and has made clear to them who the true God is and what He had done for men. Luther: To reveal God's name is to glorify or clarify the Father, God of grace, who forgives sins, rescues from death and the devil thru Christ.³⁵

35. Luther, op. cit., col. 781.

"To the men whom you have given me." This phrase refers particularly to the disciples. To them was granted the privilege of associating intimately with the Savior, of witnessing Him and witnessing for Him. Because of the important work they have to do, God selected the faithful Eleven out of the world, Christ trained them for three years in his itinerant seminary and later they became with the chosen instrument, Paul, the very backbone of the early Christian church.

"Out of the world." Separation is implied. Human beings by nature belong to the world, Psalm 51:5; John 3:6, the mass of unbelieving humanity since the fall of man into sin.³⁶ But these were separated from the world. The noble purpose of their life made it mandatory that they be so. God gave the Eleven to Christ.

"They were yours and you gave them to me." All creatures belong to God their creator, but in a special sense the elect belong to Him. God has committed the care of the elect into Christ's keeping. All chosen sons of God belong to Jesus. These Jews who in a special way had been God's children under the old dispensation now were made ministers of the new covenant, sealed in the blood of Christ, between God and man.

The expression "your word" embraces the whole of Scripture, the entire canon. Especially, Christ has given them the Gospel. This word they have guarded and kept, treasuring it carefully. Perfect tense shows that this is not a sporadic or spasmodic following of the Word, but a habit, a continuing condition. Keeping the Word is a proof of their sincerity and faithfulness. The point is carried further in succeeding verses.

36. Romans 5:12.

Verse 7:

"Now they understand that all things which you have given to me are from you."

No significant textual variations.

ἐπίγνωσαν from γινώσκω --have known; understand

πάντα ὅσα --an all inclusive expression. All things: the glory of which John speaks in 1:14.

παρὰ --from; used to express agent according to Robertson.³⁷

Meaning of the verse:

The object of the manifestation of Christ has been attained, the Father has been seen in and through Him. All the wisdom and power of Christ have been recognized as from God. On the basis of this final revelation they have arrived at the definite state of comprehension, of saving knowledge.

This verse shows the completion of blessings. "Things" refers to forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Source of all blessings is God the Father, II Corinthians 5:19.

These words elaborate on the preceding statement, that they have kept God's Word. All their past knowledge and instruction culminates in what they now understand and realize, that all things which the Father gave Christ are truly from the Father. Jesus here acknowledges His will as being harmonious to that of the Father and claims divine authority for His teaching. There is in reality no tautology here, Christ is speaking for His disciples. They are assured that the words of Jesus find their source in God the Father. From their

37. Robertson, op. cit., p. 820.

standpoint, they confess that Jesus is the divine messenger of God on earth, that He brings a message from the Father in heaven. It may have been that the disciples believed in Jesus and accepted Him as a prophet, only, but now they see the basis of His authority and also the source of all His teachings. They have come to this realization through association with Him. Luther comments on this verse as follows: "All who believe and hear Jesus are sure that the true God is His Father -- for they could not hear or keep the Word except they had been chosen, as the elect of God. Here is the fruit of the Word," Luther continues, "wherever it is grasped and kept, that a person has such knowledge and obtains all grace and goodness from the heavenly Father, given us through the Lord Christ, such blessings as could not be obtained otherwise or elsewhere, as in man's art and wisdom or in the preaching of the law."³⁸

Such testimony as Christ gives, clear, unmistakable, uncompromising, of His relationship to the Father ought silence forever the critics of His deity. These words admit no other interpretation.

Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur.

Verse 8:

"Because I have given the sayings which you have given to me, and they received and understand truly that I came from you, and they believed that you yourself sent me."

While D would add τοῦ to the ῥήματα the omission of this is substantiated by the majority of the better manuscripts. (N B C A)

38. Luther, op. cit., col. 787.

ἔξω with Genetive denotes motion from beside
ῥήματα saying, word, speech, expression, sayings,
 referring to words spoken by the lips, while
λογος would imply thoughts. Vincent ex-
 plains that this word is more personal and
 direct. Christ sums up the Gospel in its
 constituent parts.³⁹

ἰσχυρῶς Kittel tenders this true, reliable, trust-
 worthy⁴⁰

ἵπείστενοι from πίπτειν --to think to be true, to
 be persuaded of; acrist

Meaning of the verse:

These disciples are God's in the fullest sense. Here is a further explanation of the preceding. The mystery and teaching unfolds in each succeeding verse of this prayer. The result achieved through these sayings, already known in verse 7, is due to the fidelity of the messenger, says Dods.⁴¹ Lenski adds that in the utterances of Jesus the disciples heard the very voice of God.⁴² That gift which Jesus received, He in turn transmitted to His disciples as a gift of God's grace. While many others had ignored or despised this grace of God, these men whom God had given Christ have accepted it through faith, are convinced of its truth and its emanation from God in heaven. Verse seven unfolds in verse eight. The words "have known" and "believed" assert essentially the same

39. Vincent, op. cit., p. 264.

40. Kittel, op. cit., I, p. 249.

41. Dods, op. cit., p. 842.

42. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1151.

truth. To know with the heart is to believe and to believe is to be assured in one's heart. They are convinced that Jesus is God's personal messenger on earth and they have received Him into their hearts.

Luther offers the explanation that wherever the Word of God is found it creates the knowledge that Christ is God's representative, proceeding from Him, that everything He says is God's Word and will, and whatever He does is God's work and command, and all that for the purpose of helping us.⁴³ He, too, emphasizes that the only means for believing is the Word. The Word brings the right, complete knowledge of God, the saving knowledge of Christ, so imperatively demanded for salvation. Paul echoes these ideas in His familiar passage of Romans 10 concluding, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God," or, "hearing by the command of Christ," if we prefer.⁴⁴

Verse 9:

"I am praying for them; I do not pray for the world, but for those whom you have given me because they are yours."

Textual variations of little consequence.

ἑρωτάω from ἑρωτάω --ask, pray; in particular

John applies the word to a prayer to God.

But there is evident here a peculiarity of shading to be considered: the use of the word is almost entirely limited to the prayer of Jesus. He alone has such intimate

43. Luther, *op. cit.*, col. 788.

44. Romans 10:17.

communion with the Father, that the word for requests of His disciples to Him can also be employed for his requesting and petitioning (intercessory) prayer to the Father.⁴⁵

πρὸς -- for, for the benefit of, on account of, with Genetive.

κόσμος -- the world and whatever belongs to it, as the enmity against God, which will become evident at the ruin of the fallen. Quesnel: the world, the corporation of the wicked, which endures and always will endure, even though individual members of it will be snatched away from it, remains under the curse and is treated as a prisoner, who has no share in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and none at all in His petition.⁴⁶

Meaning of the verse:

He desires to commit to the Father's keeping those who have believed. He prays for them in distinction from the world, and for the present sets the world aside.⁴⁷

Luther's comments on this verse: "What must be asked for the world is that they may be converted, not that they be sanctified or kept. It is true that He both prays for the world and that He does not pray for the world. The difference, however, is this: He prays that they might abide and increase in true faith, and for those who are not yet in it, that they should come out of and depart from their evil life."⁴⁸

45. Kittel, op. cit., II, p. 684.

46. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 158.

47. Dods, op. cit., p. 322.

48. Godet, op. cit., pp. 206, 392.

Calvin and Melancthon both find in these words a committing of the non-elect to the judgment of God, the opposite of the view expressed by Luther, quoted above.⁴⁹ Citing the example of Christ's prayer, "Father, forgive them" and the prayer of Stephen for Paul that he might be converted, Luther shows that Christ prayed for others, too. Paul was converted after Stephen's prayer. So were some of the Jews for whom Christ prayed on the cross.

The emphatic ἐγὼ is in place because of the great personal interest Christ had in His disciples. Jesus recognizes that the disciples still belong to the Father. The change from the first to the second part is now complete. He is making a special prayer, and therefore restricts it to special individuals. This shows the sacerdotal character of the prayer.

Verse 10:

"And my things all are yours and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them."

The sole witness of D suggesting the acrist of ἐδότης is insufficient, when all other dependable manuscripts have the perfect.

Robertson finds here the proleptical use of the perfect.⁵⁰

Robertson says that both τῶν and ἐμῶν with the articles are predicates.⁵¹

Meaning of the verse:

The community of property and therefore of interest is unlimited, absolute; extending not only to the persons of the disciples, but

49. Tholuck, op. cit., p. 368.

50. Robertson, op. cit., p. 898.

51. Ibid., pp. 685, 770.

to all that Christ has spoken and done on earth.

The second clause is added merely to place the intimacy of the relationship in a clear light. Luther suggests that any person can make the first statement. But no creature can repeat its converse truthfully.

The world obscures, scourges and condemns Christ, but the disciples heard the Gospel and received the Savior as the Son of God.⁵²

Every glorification of the Son is also a glorification of the Father, and Son is now already glorified in those who believe, the fullness of the divine life has passed over to them.⁵³

Luther states correctly that Jesus leaves nothing excluded. The full force of the neuters, their all-embracing character, should not be limited or restricted in any way. Jesus belongs completely with all His life, deity, divine attributes and all his actions, motives, plans, to the heavenly Father.

A scoffer might seize on the omission of the πατέρα in the expression "and your things are mine" to deduce that Christ is inferior to the Father, but surely Jesus means to show the intimate relationship between Himself and the Father; therefore He need not repeat the πατέρα. In this close connection it is readily understood. Christ here claims for Himself an equality with the Father. He assumes for Himself God's deity, His eternity and His many other characteristics. The unity of the Godhead surpasses human understanding

52. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 518.

53. Tholuck, op. cit., p. 393.

but there is a glimpse of it here.

That Christ has been and is being glorified in the disciples is evident. They have received the Word and accepted the Son. The proleptic interpretation of the perfect verb would indicate that Jesus anticipates a future glory through His disciples. This is not out of harmony with the facts. Greater glory was brought to Christ after Pentecost than before. While the disciples had been fearful and even cowardly between the Resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, on that first Pentecost their faith and courage crystallized. They spread the Gospel with an indomitable zeal. Many of these chosen messengers gallantly suffered martyrdom. Thus was Christ's prophetic utterance fulfilled.

Verse 11:

"Now 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 just as we."

The change of αὐτοῖς to οὐτοῖς or the converse makes no important change in the meaning. Each is equally supported. Most good manuscripts omit the phrase which D adds after "your name": "and when I was with them I kept them in your name." We are therefore correct in omitting it.

ὧ --which, relative pronoun; a letter difficulty here; the Textus Receptus and Luther have οὐς, following a few cursives; ὀ is found in a few cursives; while η B C L and many others have ῶ as we have preferred in our translation above.

ὄνομα --name, Dative is by attraction, according to Tholuck, Dods and Goodspeed, to οὐς. The Vulgate, Luther and Authorized Version have translated the alternate form explained above.

ἁγίου -- holy; God is the author of holiness which Christ desires for His disciples. When the adjective is employed with the vocative it has the same form as a rule.⁵⁴

τηρώσῃ from τηρέω --keep, preserve; the Aorist imperative is an entreaty. It is employed in the Lord's Prayer. As such this is a new use in the Koine Greek.⁵⁵

Meaning of the verse:

The circumstances of the prayer are stated now. A sorrowful interval was coming when Jesus would be neither with them nor with the Father. Jesus is no longer in the world. Already He has bade it farewell, but the disciples remain in it, exposed, and without His accustomed counsel and defense. During this time He commends them to His Father's care.

The unity between Christ and the Father is a love unity, than which none is, nor can be, higher. Similarly, John 15: 9,10. All of Christ's experiences are the product of that love.

Here again the Savior is speaking proleptically.

If we understand "name" in the same significance as before, the sense is "Thou hast given over to Me the knowledge of Thy being, in the

54. Robertson, op. cit., p. 464.

55. Ibid., p. 948.

possession of which I entreat that they may abide." Thus, in a way, the word "name" here is equivalent to the the expression for the Word of God, ἡ οὐσία ἡ εὐλογία.

The union spoken of is not merely one of outward conformity or agreement, but it is an inward communion as the comparison of the vine and its branches in chapter 15.

Is there a discrepancy between this verse and Matthew 28:20? Not at all. That verse has reference to a being together with the disciples which belongs to a higher order of things. He is no longer with them in person in the world, bodily, but He visits them from heaven, and that continually in a spiritual manner.

Godet interprets the preservation to mean that God is to keep them in that sphere of consecration which is foreign to the world's life, and of which God Himself is the center.⁵⁶

The disciples stand in no direct relation to the Father. They belong to the Father only through the Son, are in the name of the Father, only insofar as the name of the Father is the same as the Son's. Under the name of God in Christ have the disciples assembled themselves. Only this name is church-building. If the disciples should fall away the church would pass out of existence.

The purpose of this guarding and keeping the disciples is that they may be one "even as we". The model for the oneness of the disciples is the oneness of the Father and the Son.

Luther has a passionate interpretation of this verse, alluding to the passage, Matthew 24:24 of the near-ruin of even the elect through

56. Godet, op. cit., p. 207.

tribulation and temptation. He paints the devil as so sly and roguish and his doctrine so appealing that by our own might we are powerless against him and his wiles. In Christ, however, we have victory. He explains that there is a change coming in Christ's mode of existence. No longer a localized living in the world, but a reunion with the Father....omnipresence again, with all of us everywhere, as He promised. Luther illustrates this union of believers with a foot and leg relationship. Cut the foot off and it is no longer united with the leg and body. Thus, all Christians are one with each other in the body of Christ,⁵⁷ as in Romans 12:5.

This is plainly a spiritual unity and oneness for which Christ prays. It unquestionably exists wherever true Christians are found. It previews eternal life in heaven.

Verse 12:

"While I was with them I kept them in your name which you have given me, and I protected them, and not one of them is lost (except the son of perdition) so that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

Following the best manuscripts BC+IL we have omitted "in the world" after the first clause, a phrase that is found in the Authorized Version.

ἔτηρον from τηρέω --keep; imperfect, showing a continuing action. "I have kept and still do". Shows result obtained.

ἐφυλάξην from φυλάσσω --protect, guard, preserve

57. Luther, op. cit., cols. 802, 805.

ἐπὶ αὐτοῦ from ἐπὶ ὅσων - perish, be lost

Vincent: "none of them perished but the son of perishing."⁵⁸

εἰ μὴ --adversative particle marking an exception.⁵⁹

Meaning of the verse:

Christ must now entrust the disciples to the invisible guardianship of the Father. He begins His testimony about His disciples by assuming rightly the responsibility for the disciples' preservation until now. He states how He has preserved them in grace. The result is that none is lost, except Judas. He says in effect that when this man gave himself over to sin it was not because of any fault of the Son's not providing enough watchful care, (for the Savior had warned Judas, John 13:18; 13:26; 6:64.) But God had long known the obduracy of his heart. Preuschen-Baur find here a necessity of immutability, not desirability.⁶⁰

The phrase "son of perdition" is explained by Hengstenberg as "not one designated for ruin, but rather one to whom ruin had fallen as his share."⁶¹ God is not to be given any blame for the defection of Judas. Keil points out that the ἐν indicates historical fulfillment, not the telic use, making the responsibility God's own.⁶² That is, it would be God's if the use here were telic. Historical fulfillment puts the blame on Judas himself.

The specific Scripture referred to here is Psalm 41:10, as in John 13:18.

58. Vincent, op. cit., p. 235.

59. Robertson, op. cit., p. 1188.

60. Walter Bauer-Erwin Preuschen, Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch, p. 699.

61. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 163.

62. Keil, op. cit., p. 513.

Looking at the case of Judas we remember that he is the only one lost of the entire circle of disciples. He was destined by Scripture for ruin. Judas, however, was not the victim of fate or circumstance. Despite Christ's repeated warnings he deliberately chose the path of perdition, sold his Savior for thirty pieces of silver and carved out for himself a niche in history as the world's most infamous traitor.

Judas made the fatal mistake when He expected to get rich off Jesus' kingdom, Luther points out. Consequently, disappointment and ultimate ruin was inevitable.

Verse 13:

"But now I am coming to you and I speak these words in the world that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

No textual criticism of consequence.

ἔγω from λέγω --to say words; compare notes on verse one

ἡ ἀγαλλία --joy, happiness, inner pleasure

Meaning of the verse:

"But now I am coming to you". Some interpret this phrase to mean a spiritual approach to God through prayer. Such an inference might be allowed, if it were not for the fact that the word employed here ἔρχομαι is usually expressive of motion from one place to another. Jesus is actually leaving the world and returning to the Father. Going home must have been a wonderful thought for the Savior after a thirty-three year absence. He knows that His work is finished. He is on His way back home, that home which He left "at the fullness of time" to fulfill all prophecies, to keep the Law, to suffer and die, to rise again, so that His home might be a home for all the faithful.

The fact that Jesus went home to heaven assures us of our eventual journey to the new Jerusalem. Heaven is made certain by this verse.

"and I speak these words in the world". As He Himself goes to the Father He utters this petition aloud and while He is yet with the disciples, that they might realize that the power of God was engaged for their protection.

"that they may have my joy", that is, the joy which Jesus had prepared for them, even through the prayer which He has made before them to the Father in their behalf, just like the peace which He promised and gave.⁶³ By these words Jesus would have His disciples understand what He has done for them and what His will holds for them. These words are to bring the completion of their joy.

"fulfilled in themselves." Their joy is almost fulfilled now. It must only be developed. By these calm earnest assurances Jesus wanted to keep His joy full in them, especially during the dark hours before them. For it was this same joy with which Christ had overcome all the trials and fears of life. That joy which Christ has is to be their own. The word used for fulfilling their joy περὶ ἡμῶν indicates that the hearts of the disciples should be brimming, running over with joy.

Verse 14:

"I have given them your word and the world hated them because they are not of the world even as I am not of the world."

No significant textual variations.

63. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 164.

All words here are readily understood. No difficulties of grammar or peculiarities of syntax are present.

λόγος --word, teaching, the corpus doctrinae here; author is God.

Meaning of the verse:

Here we have an additional reason for Christ's intercession for the disciples. The verse may be summarized as follows: the action of Christ, the result, and the reason behind the result.

The action of Christ: "I have given them your word." Christ summarizes the sum and substance of His teaching, repeating these phrases carefully that He may impress them upon the minds and hearts of His disciples. There is an amplification here of the preceding verses in which He mentions keeping them in God's name. That He gave first. Plainly the Word of God in its essence cannot be divorced from Christ, the eternal λόγος. Through the Word Christ has revealed the God of grace and mercy to sinful men.

The result of this action: "And the world hated them." The hatred of the world arose against them as it had against Christ.

κόσμος --world in its totality; especially here the Jewish people, steeped in their self-righteous living. The world hates them because they have received the revelation of God in Christ. If they did not have the Word in them, the world would love them, opines Hengstenberg.⁶⁴ Through the faithful acceptance of the Word of God which Jesus had given them they are separated from the world and no longer belong to it. Therefore the world hates them. The aorist tense makes the separation of the disciples from the world a contemporaneous action with the hatred of the world.

64. Ibid., p. 165.

Since the invasion of the world by Satan that enemy of God has held sway over this earth, and God's people have always been a minority group. The immediate reaction of the world to anything that savors of God is rejection, disdain and condemnation. There has always been and always will be a sharp cleavage in society, believers as opposed to unbelievers, those who accept the true God of the Bible as contrasted with those who worship idols or false gods of their mind and creation. The world still hates Christians as it hated Christ. That veneer of love for Christ which the world appears to wear is only a camouflage and a false face. At bottom the world is unchanged. It cannot change. The unregenerate mind will never have anything but contempt and scorn for Christ and for those who accept Him as God, Lord and Savior.

Finally, the reason is given: "because they are not of the world even as I am not of the world." ἐκ is used for origin or source.⁶⁵ This hatred separates them from the world, even as the leader was not of the world. This definite separation from the world is not accidental. It was foreseen by Christ to be inevitable. Since He did not belong to the world, remaining forever separate from its corrupting influence. He intends that His followers will not attach themselves to the world but will remain distinctly separate from it. There is, to be sure, a difference between the separation of Christ from the world and that of His faithful followers. But His perfect life is to be the model toward which the faithful are to strive. Lenski explains that this hatred is to be intensified, in the case of the disciples when they now begin

65. Robertson, op. cit., p. 598.

to preach and teach that Word of God.⁶⁶

Verse 15:

"I do not pray that you take them away from the world, but that you keep them from evil."

Textual variations are inconsequential.

Ἐρωτάω --pray; refer to notes on verse 9.

Ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ from evil (neuter) Godet: It must certainly be taken in the neuter sense. This is shown by the preposition ἐκ --out of, which relates to a realm out of which one is taken rather than to an individual. He believes the case is otherwise in the Lord's Prayer, where the preposition ἀπὸ --away from and the verb παράσχε --deliver are used, two expressions which refer rather to a personal enemy. Luther and Calvin agree, as Dods and the Authorized Version. Modern versions and commentators usually take this as personal, as in John, First Letter, 2:13; 4:4; 5:18. Lenski says nothing is gained in making the noun a neuter, preferring the masculine. He says that "evil" and "the evil one" are so clearly joined that protection from the former involves protection from the latter.⁶⁷ Bengel and De Wette, Tholuck and Thayer seem to favor the masculine, with Luther and Hengstenberg

66. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1144.

67. Ibid., p. 1145.

showing preference for the neuter. The writer also prefers the neuter form and meaning.

Meaning of the verse:

"I do not pray that you take them away from the world." Simplest escape of all from the anger of the world would be removal from the scene, but for this He would not ask. The work ahead for the disciples demanded that they be in the world. They were to be as a leaven in the perverted race of mankind.

Christ does not make a request for a local separation. Here is a passage against extreme asceticism. Christ does not desire that His followers be removed from the scene of action. There is a responsibility to help the world, to soothe suffering humanity, to teach and preach, to reach and win souls for Christ, to bring them the peace they seek and need.

With the examples of Jesus' mention of the devil in the case of Judas and when speaking to His disciples in previous chapters (12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and in other passages, we see that Christ implores His Father for deliverance of His disciples out of the hands of the devil and all evil. The meaning of the clause, "But that you keep them from evil," evidently includes a preservation of the disciples from the temptations or at least from succumbing to the temptations of the devil. This part of the prayer Christ is anxious to make. His own experience taught Him how forceful these temptations might be. He knew that even the most faithful of His followers would need heavenly care and protection if they were to resist successfully the wiles OF the Tempter.

Verse 16:

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Textual criticism is unnecessary.

κόσμος --world, refer to verse 14

ἐκ --out of, belonging to; a part of a group

Meaning of the verse:

"They are not of the world" is obviously a repetition of what He has said before. The difference lies in this that here they are employed as a basis for the petition of verse seventeen. This separation from the world, as we have observed, has been accomplished by the Word of God. The disciples have nothing in common with the world of unbelievers and the forces hostile to God. This statement is the foundation stone of their protection and sanctification. The reason for the world's hatred is repeated here for emphasis and to lead into the next thought, the next petition.

"Even as I am not of the world." Here Christ states a grand truth about which there can be no argument. It is simple, plain and readily understood. Christ has no part in the world. He has lived in the world, but has not allowed it to contaminate Him or His thinking. His kingdom was not of this world. He is already experiencing the desire to be rid of the world and its rotten living. In brief, He longs for home, that home of glory which He had left and in which He is now preparing a place for His faithful followers.

Verse 17:

"Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth."

A few of the lesser important manuscripts have "your truth" as in the Authorized Version; one major copy has "your word is the truth" but we abide by the rendition given, which has the support of the majority of the more reliable manuscripts.

ἁγιασμοῦ from ἁγιαζω --sanctify, consecrate; margin reading of the Revised Version has "consecrate".

This Greek term is used in the Septuagint to express dedication of and consecration of persons and things to God, according to Vincent.⁶⁸

ἐν --in, marking the sphere or element of consecration.

Meaning of the verse:

"Sanctify them in truth." In this verse Christ turns to the positive equipment which He desires for the disciples, after praying for their protection and preservation from evil, the world and its contagion of wickedness. Godet believes the word for sanctify is not synonymous with the word for purify. The holy, he says, is not opposed to the impure, but to the natural condition.⁶⁹

Hammond and De Wette understand "consecrate, Sanctify" very narrowly, as for their office only. Goodspeed follows their view, tending to weaken the force of the word. The ancients rendered the word more accurately with, "to make saints, holy ones of."

"Your word is truth." The truth in which they now lived was to be the efficient instrument of their consecration, the truth which became theirs through the revelation of the Father. Absence of the article before truth puts it in the abstract.

68. Vincent, op. cit., p. 265.

69. Godet, op. cit., p. 211.

Hengstenberg points out this Word which accomplished the separation from the world is also the means through which the separation is to be made all the more a true and complete one.⁷⁰ Kretzmann adds, "The truth remains God's even when entrusted to men to make it known to others. It is not theirs to add to or change. Within itself it holds the power to convince and convert."⁷¹

These disciples had long known that there was much truth in God's Word. Now Jesus adds that this Word is truth itself. It was truth in every point and in every respect.

Verse 18:

"Even as you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world."

No significant textual variations.

2175' 07E1 K S from 2 110 07E' 110 --send on a mission, refer to notes on verse 3.

Meaning of the verse:

In commenting on verses 11 to 15 Kittel says, "In spite of all tribulation which the disciples have who are still in the world, and are sent by Christ into the world, they will conquer the world."⁷²

Christ speaks here as though His work is already completed and their work already begun. Hengstenberg finds a new motive for the fulfillment of the prayer. The disciples are called apostles. They need true sanctification, he says, for the mission which is theirs.

70. Hengstenberg, op. cit., pp. 167, 168.

71. Paul Kretzmann, The Gospel of John, Notes.

72. Kittel, op. cit., III, p. 895.

God must sanctify them that the purpose of their mission may be realized. They have already begun this work but continuing in that work will demand God's abiding grace after Christ has withdrawn His visible presence from them. The world is their sphere of work. So they must remain there. They are not to flee the world, but work in it, to change it, to reach some with the good news of salvation.

Both God the Father and Jesus sent messengers. The purpose is not identical, however, although they are to continue the work which Jesus began. Their field is the world, far beyond the limits of Judaism and its influence.

Verse 19:

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also may be sanctified in truth."

On the basis of the majority of better manuscripts we retain the emphatic ἐγώ before "sanctify."

ἐγὼ ἑαυτὸν ἁγιάζω from ἐγὼ ἑαυτὸν --sanctify; perfect emphasizes consummation. It is the extensive perfect combining the punctiliar with the durative force; the perfect of a completed act, the result of which continues in the present.⁷³

Meaning of the verse:

Kittel says whenever Jesus sanctified Himself it was a proof of His deity.⁷⁴ Tholuck finds here the self-consecration of Christ

73. Robertson, op. cit., p. 907.

74. Kittel, op. cit., I, p. 113.

through His sacrificial death. He makes "Sanctify" mean "consecrate." Jesus, he says, stood ready to consecrate Himself that the disciples be sanctified in truth.⁷⁵ This is Bengel's view as well.

In refuting Bengel's interpretation Hengstenberg states that such an introduction of a new idea would destroy the connection with the previous verse. Lenski continues the refutation with these words: "We cannot admit a play on the word and make the variant sense of the word sanctify the very point of what is said. The two acts are essentially alike, although the one pertaining to Jesus is active while the other pertaining to the disciples is passive."⁷⁶

Christ says the disciples are to be sanctified in truth. This expression with the absence of the article speaks of truth generally, as in III John 1. The expression has more than adverbial force.

75. Tholuck, op. cit., p. 399.

76. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1151.

**Part Three: Verses 20-26: Christ's Prayer
for Future Disciples**

Verse 20:

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who come to believe on me through their word."

The majority of better manuscripts ABC D, have the present participle for "believing" instead of the future of the TR. We take the former reading, since it is the more difficult and most substantially attested by reliable sources.

ἵνα πάντες see notes on verse 9.

πιστεύουσιν from πιστεύω --believe; ingressive present, participle. Future meaning is implied without actual future form. Present has more durative force. "those who ever come to believe."

Meaning of the verse:

The enlargement of the church is now referred to, the logical result of the consecration of the disciples to their duty. The future body of believers is conceived of as actually existing. Christ casts His eyes into the future, looking upon the whole mass of believers which in all coming centuries should be gathered into His kingdom; for them He offers prayer.

Hengstenberg comments:

All faith in the church is dependent on the Word of the Apostles either oral or written. Undoubtedly the Lord had before His eyes at this time the inspired Word which the Holy Ghost would give to men through the apostles.⁷⁷

77. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 169.

Jesus makes a distinction between these and those who will later believe on Him, but the prayer embraces both as belonging together.⁷⁸

Such unity involves unity of doctrine and life. It is more than unanimity. It is unity of action.

Luther says that here Christ opens heaven to all until Judgment Day. He states there is no more comforting passage of Scripture for us than this.⁷⁹ Christ prayed for us.

Not all who hear the world believe. Christ prays only for the believers. He indicates clearly that the word has power to convince and convert. He demonstrates that the Gospel is the means of grace. It has the power to create faith. It has the power to save.

Ylvisaker points out the difference between the apostles and future believers. The former became believers directly through Christ's word; all others through the word of the apostles, which is actually nothing but Christ's word. He gives us, too, the necessary conclusion that Christ's prayer embraces only future believers, only true believers, the communion of saints. This, he remarks, sets the proper limitations on the prayer and saves much confusion concerning Christ's petitions in the following verses.⁸⁰

Verse 21:

"That all may be one, just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me."

There are minor textual deviations from this translation with

78. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1154.

79. Luther, op. cit., vol. 829.

80. Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 234.

some manuscripts preferring the vocative for the nominative of "Father." The second εἰ --one, that they may be one in us, is omitted in the better texts. It is readily understood, however.

The first clause introduced by ὅτι --that, is an object clause, non-final; the second is in apposition to the first. The third participle introduces a purpose clause.

Meaning of the verse:

Quite evidently the extension of the church could imperil its unity. This unity finds its ideal in the union between the Father and the Son. Also its unifying principle and element. It is to result in the universal belief in Christ's mission.⁸¹

Reference is made here to the elect, those who are so powerfully attracted as to connect themselves with the kingdom of Christ.

The true unity consists in this that we through our association with the Son and through Him with the Father become partakers of the divine nature.⁸²

Quesnel says:

The whole religion, all plans of God's tend toward unity. Jesus Christ becomes the center and the bond itself through His incarnation. The entire fulfillment of the Godhead dwells substantially in Him (really and completely) through the Word, and He dwells spiritually in true Christians through faith and love.⁸³

Here we have a description of the una sancta. Unity of the invisible church. All members of one body, governed by one head --

81. Dods, op. cit., p. 845.

82. II Peter 1:4.

83. Hengstenberg, op. cit., p. 170.

Christ. Also the union with Christ, the mystical union.

Speaking of the mystical union, the unity of the church and union with the Father, Godet says: The question is not only, as is often supposed, of the union of Christians among themselves, but, above all, of the union which is the basis of this, that of the body of believers with Christ and, through Him, with God Himself.⁸⁴

It is unity of hidden character, like that of the Father and the Son. That unity was an identical nature, perfect mutual understanding, based on flawless divine love.

The unio mystica -- the Father and the Son are to be the element in which the believers live and move -- as in John 15:5; I John 1:3, I John 4:13.

Jesus finally refers to the fruit of the union. Indirectly He prays for the world. The world is to believe that Father sent the Son. Not that the world will ultimately accept and acknowledge the Savior.

In summing up the meaning and application of this verse, Ylvisaker comments:

"It was this spiritual unity of faith, the union with Christ, their Redeemer, that made the first Christians such a powerful sermon to the world; it was their faith, not any outward organic union...that made the world recognize Christ, the object of their faith, as the One sent by the Father. And so the statement of history bears out this prayer of Christ: 'The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church,' and the blood of martyrs is after all, nothing but the manifestation to the world of the faith that dwells in the believers' hearts."⁸⁵

84. Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 237.

85. Ibid., p. 240.

Luther sums up his impression of this verse in these words:

"I know of no place other than this chapter of the entire body of Christian doctrine so richly written...and set forth with such powerful words than this, namely, that in Christ we possess everything which we are to have and nothing in ourselves or some other human being."⁸⁶

Verse 22:

"And I have given them the glory which you have given me that they may be one just as we are one."

No significant textual variation.

δοξα --glory, refer to verse 1. Augustine interprets it to refer to immortality. Chrysostom, Grotius to the power of performing miracles; many others distinguish the three-fold glory: doctrine, miracles, unity. Hengstenberg says it means unity with the Father. Calvin understands here the inner glory. Zahn resolves the problem for us; the word "glory" assumes an essential place in the language usage of John; it is bound up with τιμιη --honor, ειρηνη --peace, αφθαρσια incorruption, χρις --grace and αληθεια --truth and stands in opposition to φθορα --corruption, μωρια --vanity and αθις --tribulation. Here it refers, says Zahn, merely to the brightness and the reflection of all virtues and perfections of God.⁸⁷

86. Luther, op. cit., col. 834.

87. Theodor Zahn, Das Evangelium des Johannes, p. 238.

Kittel has: "divine radiance, majesty, splendor, honor."⁸⁸

Meaning of the verse:

The real nature of the unio mystica is described. By the indwelling of Jesus the believers are made partakers of the divine nature. In this manner the unity which combines and holds together the Christians is constantly strengthened. The reference here to the imputation of glory to the Christian is stated more fully and understood in Romans chapter eight. Scripture knows of only one glory. We need make no distinction in the use of the word. At the present time Christians possess that glory in part, and they will receive it fully on Judgment Day, Revelation 3:21.

"The glory which you have given me" is explained by the familiar passage, "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily."⁸⁹ This glory Christ has imparted to His followers. It is the subsequent gift of God after faith through grace.

"That they may be one, just as we are one" is a prayer for unity that is beyond the grasp of human intelligence. The intimate communion of a believer with Christ and through Christ with the Father sounds the depths of all wisdom. We can only stand in wonder at the matchless simplicity of these words in revealing to us the highest truth known to man: that He can in Christ be so united with His fellowmen that that unity approaches the unity of the godhead itself. But the next verses make the truth still more startling and therefore more beautifully real.

88. Kittel, op. cit., II, p. 25.

89. Colossians 2:9.

Verse 23:

"I in them and you in me, that they may be perfected in one, that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them just as you loved me."

Between ἐγὼ and ἐγὼ D adds an article (τὸ), but the text without the article is better substantiated. Other differences are minor.

ΤΕΤΕ ΔΕΛΩΜΕΝΟΣ from ΤΕ ΔΕΛΩΩ --perfect, perfectly unite; to complete, to add what is necessary to make a thing full or complete.⁹⁰ The form of the verb is perfect participle.

The οὕτως introduces a result clause. The ἵνα shows the aim of the unity mentioned previously.

Meaning of the verse:

As the prayer progresses to its conclusion the thoughts and words of our High Priest soar to loftier and loftier heights, heights that make our human reason tremble and stumble. Reason alone cannot follow the logic here. A large measure of faith is requisite to the full understanding of these simple words.

The unity of the Father and the Son is duplicated in the unity of the Son with believers. Since God cannot stoop to man's level the passage means that Christ lifts Christians far above themselves and their environment to live in Him in spirit, to be brought into a divine unity. Thus, the work of Christ is accomplished when men are one by Christ dwelling in them. God is in Christ. Christ is in each believer and thereby a true and final unity is formed. One result is the conviction wrought in the world.

90. J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 618.

This mission of Christ and its results prove not only the Father's love of the Son but also His love for men. The nature of that love is the same, as shown by καρῶν. That God who said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" according to these words deigns to say the same of Christians of all time. His love once sent Christ into the world to redeem the world, a sacrifice that still beggars understanding. That same love is at work now to preserve Christians in faith, to bless their labors in the Lord, to gather in a rich harvest of souls. No wonder Paul exclaimed, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!"⁹¹ Truly this is the holy of holies of all Scripture.

Verse 24:

"Father, whatsoever you have given me, I will that wherever I am they too shall be with me, that they may behold my glory, which you have given me, because you loved me before the founding of the world."

Textual criticism deals with the difference between the vocative and nominative form of "father," with the variant relative ὅ, supported by AS B D and others, the better reading, and οὗ supported by lesser copies. Whether the word διδωκας or διδωκῃς is correct is difficult, but we prefer the former, the perfect, along with Nestle, the more difficult reading.

ὅ --body is taken collectively, as in verse 2, according to Vincent.⁹² Robertson agrees.

91. Romans 11:33.

92. Vincent, op. cit., p. 265.

--will; last will and testament of the Savior

 --founding, a foundation.

Meaning of the verse:

"whatsoever, or that which, you have given me" is the community of believers. To share in the destiny of Christ has already been promised to His followers, John 10:26; 14:3. This is the consummation of Christian blessedness.

Here Christ is no longer asking or praying. He is uttering His will, His final desire. That will embraces the elect of God in Him. Them and them alone He wants to be where He is forever. So shall they see the blazing glory of Him as the Son of God. Thus, the glory of Christ resulting from the eternal love of the Father is not only seen but shared in by the disciples.

Christ wills a close communion with His believers. His will here is also the Father's will, for there is complete unanimity in the Godhead.

Verse 25:

"Righteous Father, the world indeed did not know you, but I did know you, and these know that you have sent me."

The nominative or vocative for "Father" does not alter the meaning of the term; other textual variations are minor.

δικαίος --righteous, passing just judgment on others; judicial meaning of the term: rendering to each his due.

καὶ...καὶ --both...and; indeed...but; Elsner, Lampe and Goodspeed translate the first καὶ with "though." Simcox has: "While the world knew thee not, though I knew

thee, these on their part...."⁹³ Similarly
 Westcott: It serves to coordinate the two main
 clauses. Force is to say, two facts are equally
 true. It is true that the world knew thee not;
 it is true that these knew that thou didst send
 me." ⁹⁴ Our translation gives a simple interpre-
 tation. "The world indeed did not...but I....
 and these.."

Meaning of the verse:

The appeal here is to God's justice--that the believing may
 not share the fate of this unbelieving world.

"Righteous Father". He is righteous and merits all confidence
 for His truthfulness and goodness; the world, however, misunderstands
 Him and does not know about His wondrous love.⁹⁵

Repetitions here of previous ideas show again that Christ
 wanted to emphasize the cleavage between the world and the child
 of God with resounding force. There is only one significant dif-
 ference between the world and the Christian. One knows the true
 God, the others do not. The world did not know God. It could not
 know Him, except through Christ, and the world has wholly rejected
 Christ.

This Christ knew the true God as His only Father in eternity,
 understood Him completely, had the same will as the Father. Now
 the disciples and all Christians understand fully and are certain
 that Christ is the ambassador of the Father. "God sent forth his

93. Dods, op. cit., p. 845.

94. Ibid.

95. Zahn, op. cit., p. 239.

son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law."⁹⁶ We might draw on the powerful truth told in John 3:16. Christ is now summing up His teaching and the purpose of His life. Any one of these passages contains the whole Gospel in compact form. Here is multum in parve, non multa sed multum from the master teacher and greatest linguist of all time. He actually spoke heavenly truths in simple language. Even in our English translation most of the words are monosyllabic. It takes nothing less than the crucifixion of language itself to disclaim the deity of Christ, His apostleship from the Father, His eternity.

Verse 26:

"And I have made known to them your name and I shall make it known, that the love with which you have loved may be in them, and I in them."

No significant textual criticism.

ἐγνώρισαν from γινώσκω --make known; aorist and future; causative form of know--to cause someone to know.

ἀγάπην --love, highest love, love of God toward Christ, and of men toward God and one another: whether in soul or expressed. It surpasses friendship, filial, intersexual love.

ἧς --which; like the cognate accusative; relative

shows use of accusative of inner content,
used also with accusative of person, the
double accusative.⁹⁷

Meaning of the verse:

Here is the fitting climax of this prayer of prayers. The steady progress upward has reached the peak. Shortly after these words were spoken Christ went into Gethsemane to raise the curtain on the most unjust act, and yet most necessary event of human history:

"I have made known your name to them" restates what He has said all along. The future verb following leads into the death, says Weiss, and sending of the Spirit, says Westcott, in which events Christ would make known with even greater force the name of the Father, the reality of God's grace and mercy for fallen mankind.⁹⁸ Dods suggests that the end in view is that the love with which the Father loved Son might rest on His disciples.

He continues to make His name known through preaching. Through the teaching of God's essence and attributes, the love of the Father would be transmitted to them and they would abide in the Son. Thus the wonderful communion would be made perfect.

The last and finest word, "and I in them" is the end and crown of all. His desire for this intimate communion with His followers is the final and most striking proof of His love.

97. Robertson, op. cit., p. 478.

98. Dods, op. cit., p. 846.

Summary of the Exegetical Study

From the depths of the soul the Savior speaks aloud to His heavenly Father. He asks for the restoration of glory now that His work on earth is completed. That work is the full redemption of mankind. It needed only the suffering and death of the God-man, Jesus Christ. Christ has revealed to men the true God and they have come to believe in that God and His Son, the Savior Jesus. This knowledge of theirs is the beginning of eternal life for them, since that life is accepted, apprehended and possessed by faith, that is, knowledge and trust, in the true God, as Christ revealed Him to them in His Word. The glorification which He could accomplish as the Jew Jesus is complete. He prays therefore for the continuing glorification in heaven as the crowned Son of God. Restoration of divine glory to Christ meant a higher glory for God the Father. These disciples soon would publish far and wide the Gospel of salvation so that men everywhere might confess that Jesus is the Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Turning His attention to the needs of the disciples Christ elaborates on the manner in which He had accomplished His purpose of glorifying God. He has revealed God by word and deed to the disciples who were assigned to Him. So powerful was this influence that the disciples accepted the Word of God. They kept it. They understood now His relationship with the Father and the mission which the Father had commissioned Him to perform. With His work drawing to a close and His subsequent removal from the scene impending Jesus felt keenly what His absence would involve. The strong courage of the disciples might melt away as they faced the herculean job of evangelizing the world.

They needed unity -- oneness of purpose and fellowship. Until now Christ had carefully watched over and guarded them. Yet one was lost for the fulfillment of prophecy -- the son of perdition, the traitor, Judas Iscariot, "which also betrayed Him." When He was made known others would feel shaken, Peter's denial would cause some to tremble inwardly.

They needed joy -- that happiness which Christ had, happiness in knowing God and doing His will. Regardless of the bitter hatred which the world would muster against them, hatred generated by their faithfulness to the Word of God, such faithfulness necessarily involving a disdain and abstinence from worldly revelry, from popular sin -- regardless of that enmity Christ desired and prayed that His disciples be happy. True joy is therefore an intrinsic part of Christianity. In the world the disciples must continue to live and operate. Christ did not promote asceticism -- but their intercourse with the world should serve not to identify them with natural man, but to bring into sharper, clearer focus the difference between a child of the world and a child of God in Christ.

They needed consecration and sanctification -- sincere devotion to their tasks and to their God. Christ prayed that they be sanctified in truth. God provides the whole truth. Christ was convinced that this truth would at once consecrate them for their work and bring them into a closer relationship with Him and the Father.

Jesus broadens the scope of His prayer to include all Christians of all time. He blueprints the pattern of the growth of the church, saying that "faith cometh by hearing" the word of the apostles. This growth and spread of the Christian Church under the apostles, and

later, will endanger its unity. So it is in this area of theology that Christ brings His prayer to a close.

He prays for the preservation of inner unity of the Church, with His unity with the Father as a model. He announces that it is His will that His disciples of every age be with Him forever, to behold His divine glory and majesty. This unity with Christ beginning on earth and lasting forever is to be proof positive to the world that God the Father loves those who are in Christ. Without Christ the world fumbles in ignorance of the true God and His grace. There is plainly only one path to the mansions of heaven, namely, Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Him.

Finally He promises to keep on making known the Father's name, involving the preaching of the Father's love in Christ, that the love which God so offered Christ, and which united them into an inseparable union in the godhead might be given to Christ's followers too, and that Christ might live in them forever. Here is the climax of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the only complete prayer which He offered to the Father which is recorded in full in Scripture. John has done us a service that can never be measured in transmitting this prayer to us. For in it we have the loftiest truths of all Scripture, the complete Gospel of Christ, told in simple language, which even in translation is mostly words of one syllable.

The Doctrinal Study

A: Bibliology

In theological parlance, bibliology is the term for the doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning the origin, the properties and the purposes of the Bible.⁹⁹ The chapter under consideration has numerous references to the spoken words of Jesus, the word which He received from the Father and the word which the disciples and their successors would later preach.

The church confesses according to the Scriptures that the Holy Bible has divine origin. This chapter provides verses six, eight and fourteen in support of this doctrine. When Jesus says in verse eight, "Because I have given them the sayings which You had given to Me," He indicates that His teachings, the very words which He spoke, He has received as a gift from the heavenly Father. Again in verse fourteen He refers to, "Your word", likewise in verse six.

Quite evidently Jesus points out that His teachings have their origin in God. Thereby He places His religious concepts above all human philosophy or man-made religion. In His religious activity He has merely been the spokesman of God the Father. He has transmitted from God to men the wisdom of God and His plan for men. It is this divine origin of Scripture which the Christian church has steadfastly maintained and must continue to defend in a world that accepts only human wisdom.

The nearest this chapter comes to a reference to the doctrine of inspiration, whereby the church teaches that inspired penmen wrote the thoughts and words which the Holy Spirit breathed into their thinking, is a remark in verse twenty concerning all those who

99. A. L. Graebner, Outlines of Doctrinal Theology, p. 3.

will come to believe on Christ, "Through their word." That the word of the apostles would have the power to create faith, a divine act, presupposes that it has a divine origin. Indirectly, therefore, Jesus refers to the spoken and written word of the apostles as being inspired of God.

Properties of the Bible which come under consideration in a doctrinal study of this chapter are its divine authority and its efficacy.

That simple statement of the Savior's, "Your word is truth" establishes the divine authority of the Scripture and recommends it as the only infallible source and norm of doctrine and rule of life. Here Jesus echoes the sentiments of the Psalmist who wrote, "Thy word is true from the beginning."¹⁰⁰

Lenski says of verse 17:

"It certifies the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture excepting no portion of it. The holy garment of the Word is seamless; it has no rent of errors -- or call them mistakes -- which hands today must sew up. Thy word -- signifies all of it, the Word of the Old Testament on which Jesus placed His approval again and again, plus the revelation that Jesus added in person with the promise of its perfect preservation on through the Paraclete (14:26; 16:13)." - p. 1149.

Similarly, when Jesus uttered the words, "Sanctify them in the truth" in verse seventeen and again when He said, "Those who come to believe on Me through their word" He gave powerful testimony to the efficacy of Scripture. These and similar passages have prompted the church to teach that the power of the Holy Spirit is indissolubly united with the words themselves and that the Spirit utilizes the

100. Psalm 119: 160

words in transforming the hearts and minds of human beings.

Finally, the purposes of Scripture may be seen in this chapter: converting the unregenerate, (verse 8), preserving the child of God in faith, consecrating the faithful to holiness of life, combating error with truth, (verse 17)--these and others may be gleaned from the verses in this Sacerdotal Prayer.

While not the most important teaching of this chapter, the doctrine concerning the Holy Scripture certainly has not been neglected, or left unclear in this unique prayer of the Savior.

B: Theology Proper: The Doctrine of God.

In His Sacerdotal Prayer the Savior opens His heart, the heart of God in man to reveal to sinful men the mysteries of God. Throughout this section of Scripture we get a glimpse of God's character, His personality, His integrity, His love for human beings, His will, His justice, His truth, His mercy and grace.

The unfathomable character of God is seen in verses 2, 3, 21 and 25. These passages from the chapter under consideration show the various aspects of God and forcefully describe His integrity as well. That one expression, "the only true God" suggests many doctrinal concepts. At once it demolishes all hope of the heathen in their false gods and establishes monotheism as the true idea of God. That this only true God is seen in the teachings and life of Jesus Christ shows how the great and true God determined to reveal His nature to sinful men. Plainly this passage stresses the unity of God. There is and can be only one true and living God. "There is none else beside him."¹⁰¹

101. Deuteronomy 4:35

and ".....beside me there is no God."¹⁰² and in the New Testament, "But to us there is but one God"¹⁰³ prove conclusively that the Lutheran scholars who drafted the Augsburg Confession were correct in stating, "there is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God."¹⁰⁴

The personality of God is evident from the very fact of the prayer itself. A God who can give people into the care and keeping of another person, who can send His Son into the world, who can keep human beings from being influenced toward evil, who is accorded the name, "Father," and who is capable of love certainly must be a person and not merely a force and influence. He is a spirit, complete and subsisting in Himself.¹⁰⁵ Yet this same God is described as having a glory equal with the Son, "which I had at your side before the world existed" (verse 5) and in that passage the plurality of persons in the Godhead comes to our attention. Their unity in essence coupled with their individual personalities brings us to the threshold of the great mystery of the trinity, when compared with other passages of the Scripture, "...in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."¹⁰⁶ The unity in trinity is assumed in this chapter without being clearly stated. Such an assumption is a compelling proof of its reality.

From the personality of God we may proceed to His characteristics or attributes. Those quiescent aspects of His nature, indivisibility, immutability and infinity, which dogmaticians catalog are not at all prominent in this section of Scripture. However, the operative

102. Isaiah 44:6.

103. I Corinthians 8:6

104. Triglotta, p. 43.

105. Graebner, op. cit., p. 17.

106. Matthew 28:19.

attributes of God which are to be understood from this chapter are His wisdom, His will, His justice, His truth, His goodness and His power.

When the Lord God committed the authority over all human flesh to His Son and when He sent His Son to reveal Himself that those who accepted His Son would understand both the true God and receive eternal life, He gave evidence of His divine wisdom by which He devises, disposes and directs the proper means to proper ends in the plan of salvation.¹⁰⁷ These same actions of God may be adduced to show His will, that is the accomplishment of His designs and the fulfillment of His counsels. It was the Father's will that placed the disciples in the care and keeping of Jesus Christ and His will likewise that these disciples achieve a unity among themselves and with the Lord Jesus which approaches the unity in the Godhead itself. This conclusion follows from the fact that Christ assumes an equality with God and in stating His own will, by that fact itself, is uttering the will of God.

That appellation, "O righteous Father," (verse 25) strongly supports and defines the justice of God. He is a judge whose judgments are in perfect conformity with His laws.¹⁰⁸

More intimately than anyone who ever walked this earth the Lord Jesus knew the heavenly Father. When, therefore, He calls the Father, "righteous" it is assuredly true that He is exactly what Jesus says He is, a true and immutably just judge, as the Psalmist says, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and holy in all His works."¹⁰⁹

107. Graebner, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

108. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

109. Psalm 145: 17.

Thus the heavenly Father is one who executes His good and gracious will upon His children and upon the world according to His own righteous nature and holy purpose.

What we have concluded regarding the righteousness of God may well be transmitted to establish His truthfulness. It is impossible to conceive of a divine being whose very word is truth itself without concluding that that being is faithful and true and that his actions are in full conformity with his words. We cite the reasoning of Paul from Romans, "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid! Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou art judged."¹¹⁰

In close connection with the justice, the will and the truthfulness of God, is His goodness. Under the term goodness we include God's love, benevolence, grace and mercy. When John penned the familiar words of verse three, "Now this is the eternal life that they know You as the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent," he may have recalled what he wrote in the third chapter of this gospel, as he summed up the good news of salvation in the familiar sixteenth verse. The gift of God being eternal life to everyone who believes plainly evinces His matchless love even as His solicitous attitude toward the disciples in protecting and defending them from evil clearly indicates His benevolence. These individuals who are the objects of God's

110. Romans 3: 3,4.

benevolence regardless of whether or not they merit His kindness, have experienced to a large degree inexplicable grace of God.

This attribute of grace in God lies in close proximity to His mercy. These individual characteristics of God are noted here to complete the study of His nature but we reserve the full explanation of these actions and their effects upon human beings to a later chapter, namely that on Soteriology.

Finally, divine power is ascribed to the Lord who is the maker of heaven and earth and for whom nothing is impossible.¹¹¹ His power in being able to fulfill this prayer of Christ's bringing about a unity among human beings which is almost a divine unity, preserving the disciples in His name, bestowing that divine glory upon Christ which He possessed in eternity, having in His authority the destinies of men far surpasses the limited power and authority of mortal men.

In summary we have scrutinized this prayer of the Lord Jesus in an effort to get better acquainted with God. The many doctrinal concepts which have sprung from the words in the process of interpretation set this chapter aside as the one in Holy Scripture which tells us the most about God in the simplest language. Theologians have all through the centuries matched their most astute minds with these simple words in an effort to define the concepts of God which Jesus revealed. Dogmaticians have been forced to write volumes in an effort to explain the simple yet unfathomable mysteries of the true God.

111. Luke 1:37.

C. Cosmology

Dogmaticians define Cosmology as the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures concerning the genesis, nature and estates of created things and is divided into Cosmology proper, Angelology and Anthropology.¹¹² In the present chapter the third section, Anthropology, alone requires consideration. Specifically, verses 6, 9, 12 and 14 contain the contribution of this chapter to the cosmological segment of the corpus doctrinae.

That all men belong to God may be concluded from the statement, "thine they were," and "none of them is lost but the son of perdition." The faithful disciples as well as the traitor, Judas, are God's property by right of creation.

Jesus excludes unbelievers from the pale of this prayer. He says, "I do not pray for the world." Lenski explains this statement in these words, "This special intercession deals with believers only inasmuch as they alone are able to receive the gifts which the Father has for his children." Elsewhere Jesus certainly prayed for unbelievers; for instance, His first utterance from the cross, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." This indicates His concern for the world. But in this prayer the difference between the world and believers is steadfastly maintained.

The fact that the disciples are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world brings upon them the ceaseless enmity of the world, verse 14. Christ and His followers are the object of this hatred because the world belongs to the kingdom of evil and is eternally opposed to the kingdom of righteousness.

112. Graebner, op. cit., p. 47.

Perhaps the greatest problem in this chapter under this section is the expression, "the son of perdition." The divine government of evil coupled with the foreknowledge of God are present in the defection of Judas Iscariot. The evil act of Judas was foreknown and prophesied in the Old Testament. God merely directed this evil act to the end which He desired, according to His wisdom, goodness and justice. Judas, being a temporary believer, if a believer at all, was under the law and its condemnation, not under grace. 113

D: Christology

Fundamental to the religion of Jesus Christ is the teaching of His nature and person, His office and work. Widespread division on this doctrine has precipitated the controversies that eventually split the Church and continues to divide certain segments of the Christian Church today. Basic to the understanding of Christ's work is an understanding of who He is. In the Sacerdotal Prayer we have from the lips of Jesus Himself the answer to many of these theological and christological problems. We survey them in the following paragraphs.

In noting Christ's relation with the Father, we have some definite clues in the present chapter: Verses 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26. When Jesus addresses God as "Father" in asking for the same glory which God has, when He states that that glory was His in eternity with the Father, and when He refers to the Father and Himself possessing all things in common we catch a glimpse of the intimate relationship obtaining between these persons in the Godhead.

113. J. T. Miller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 598.

This prayer must certainly have guided the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. when they drafted the words, "begotten of the Father before all worlds..." in the Nicene Creed. The Father-Son relationship is complete and perfect.

The perfection of this complete unanimity between the Father and the Son and the very unity which exists in the Godhead may be understood from expressions as "even as we are one" and "just as we." Here the use of the personal pronoun "we" has a powerful meaning in establishing the unity of essence and purpose in the Godhead.

From this perfection flows the logical conclusion that Christ is at once true God and true man. Significantly enough most attacks on the deity of Christ begin with an attempt to discredit the authenticity and genuineness of the Gospel of Saint John. Many verses of this chapter demolish the arguments against the deity of Christ and establish Him as the divine Savior. One of the prerogatives of God is the bestowing of the gift of eternal life and we see in verse 2 that Jesus assumes that authority for Himself. In calling Himself God's Son and asking for the glory which He had as the pre-existent Logos and which He desires to be restored to Him is another unmistakable indication of His divinity.

Further, the community of property which Jesus mentions and which was referred to in discussing His relationship with the Father adequately demonstrates that the equality with the Father must necessarily mean deity. Similarly, the words "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee" show His unity with God the Father and hence also His deity. In summary these verses show that Christ claims for Himself divine attributes, divine works and divine glory.

In the life of Christ scholars distinguish between the state of humiliation and the state of exaltation in the realm of Christian doctrine. This prayer largely describes the state of exaltation, inasmuch as the former condition of humiliation is rapidly drawing to a close and will soon pass into history. There are, however, some reminders in this prayer of the fact that Jesus did veil His divine majesty and power for a time. In verse two the fact that Jesus acknowledges that the Father has given Him power or authority over all flesh and in verse five where He asks for a restoration of His former glory, there is an allusion to the state of humiliation. With these few exceptions the prayer very properly sets before us the Savior as a glorified Lord. Indeed it was spoken during the time when Christ was being humbled and made obedient unto death, but it previews His life after the resurrection when His glory will be restored and His faithful followers will one by one lay down the arms of battle and come to find rest in Him.

Generally we divide the work of Christ into three categories, defined by His three-fold office as our Prophet, Priest and King. As our Prophet He has "manifested God's name to men." He has been active as the shepherd of souls in keeping those who had been entrusted to Him in God's name and in guarding them so that none would be lost, except the son of perdition. In verse twenty Jesus indicates that even after He has left this earth His prophetic office would be continued by the disciples since He prays, "For those who will believe in Me through their word." In the closing verse of the chapter the two aspects of Christ's prophetic office, combining His own activity with that of His

faithful followers in the future, find a synthesis in the words "I have made known to them your name and I will make it known."

When our great High Priest uttered this Sacerdotal Prayer He gave a clear picture of the nature of His priestly office. The words, "I pray for" which occur again and again indicate that Jesus has made and continues to make prayers for His people. These prayers may be termed intercessory petitions and with this in view we can see that the whole chapter from beginning to end brings out the sacerdotal character of the work of Christ.

Finally, the kingly office of Christ may be understood from the fact that He has both authority over all flesh (Kingdom of Power), that He has authority to bestow eternal life upon the elect (Kingdom of Grace), and that He is looking for a return of His former glory which He will then share with the faithful (Kingdom of Glory).

This brief survey of the person and work of Christ, as defined and described in the Sacerdotal Prayer merely affords the reader a taste of the doctrinal richness of this chapter in this area of theology.

E: Soteriology

In addition to the significant truths which have already been considered it is evident that the most important subject discussed in the chapter fits into the category of soteriology. This is the doctrine of Holy Scripture concerning the application of the merits of Christ to the individual sinner, whereby the sinner is led to the possession and enjoyment of these blessings which Christ has merited for all mankind.¹¹⁴

114. Graebner, op. cit., p. 154/

In our use of the term soteriology we include the two subdivisions which some dogmaticians make of pneumatology (doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit and His activity) and ecclesiology (doctrine of the church and ministry.) References throughout the chapter to this section of doctrinal theology make the attempt to catalogue all of the aspects of these doctrines a rather impossible task. However we shall attempt to summarize the various teachings set forth.

The instrumental cause in salvation is understood by dogmaticians to be the means of grace, the Gospel and Sacraments. Verse twenty is one of the outstanding passages in Scripture to substantiate the power of the Word in its ability to convert and its promise of being successful. "The Word is the vital means and the root of faith. At once it appears how dangerous it is to be ignorant of the Word or to alter and falsify it in any way . . . apart from the Word there is no church, because there is no faith apart from the Word; and the church is constituted out of those and those alone who have faith."¹¹⁵

Earlier in the prayer Jesus intimates that the disciples having heard the Word have kept it. In so doing they give silent testimony to its power to convert the sinner, demonstrating that it is truly a means of grace. We find in this chapter no reference to either of the Sacraments.

In discussing the Word as a means of grace it is always necessary to keep in mind that its power can be resisted. This chapter brings the figure of Judas, the son of perdition, before our eyes. If a man who accompanied with the Savior during the three years of His public ministry

115. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1154.

could and did defect, there is a stern warning here against willful resistance to the Word. Such resistance is possible and frustrates the attempt of God to save an individual.

The work of the Holy Spirit in using an instrumental cause, the means of grace, to change the hearts of men is assumed all along but is not definitely stated in the chapter itself. That these disciples and others are called into the Kingdom of God through the Gospel cannot be denied, but the activity of the Holy Spirit as a person is not mentioned. Likewise the act of conversion itself, which Scripture attributes to the work of the Holy Spirit, is assumed both in the case of the disciples and future believers.

"The act of saving faith is the acceptance of the benefits of Christ offered through the means of grace by knowledge of, ascent to, and reliance on the teachings and promise of the Gospel and, especially, confidence in Christ."¹¹⁶ In verse eight the Savior speaks of the disciples having received the Word which Christ has been given by the Father and believing that the Father has sent Him. On the other hand, the disciples were now in the state of saving faith as seen from verse six and they are to be kept in that state as we understand from verse seventeen.

In discussing the major objective of the life of Christ, universal redemption, we cite verse four. Jesus says, "I have finished the work which you gave me to do." This work was simply the objective justification of the entire world. His reference to future actions that still were to occur as being in the past indicate the certainty with which He

116. Graebner, op. cit., p. 186.

approached the final phase of His ministry of reconciliation. Again in verse eleven Jesus indicates that He is returning to His heavenly glory and will no longer remain in the world. Therefore His work was complete. In consequence of the fulfillment of this work, the disciples have experienced peace with God since Jesus speaks of the Father as loving them with the same love which He had for the Son (verse 23) and specifically requests that the disciples may participate in the joy which Christ experienced in His close union with the Father (verse 14) and also the final comfort expressed in verse 24 that Jesus desires His faithful followers to be with Him in glory everlasting.

Subjective justification involves the acceptance by the individual of the merits which Christ has secured offered in the Gospel. It occurs as a simultaneous act in the process of conversion and it ushers in the sanctification of the individual believer. Here the work of the Holy Spirit is attributed to the Father when Jesus asks, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth." This shows that Father, Son and Spirit participate commonly in the several divine acts which Scripture describes. Thus the unity of the Godhead is emphasized again and again. Preservation of the disciples in the truth involved their increase in knowledge and wisdom of God, their daily putting off of the old man and putting on of the new man, their progressive sanctification and their performance of good works.

Further this sanctification would include the prayer of Jesus in verse eleven that their unity and fellowship be permanent, and the statement in verse fifteen that they should be kept from evil. As

consecrated followers of the Savior these disciples in their sanctification are completely separate from the world of unbelievers. The Word has brought about this separation and the prayer leaves no doubt that the world is cognizant of this cleavage.

When we consider these few disciples as a unit and add to them the believers from their day down to this and to the end of time, we have what Scriptures term the Church, what the Creed calls the "Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints," and what dogmaticians have termed the invisible Church, the una sancta. References to this teaching are numerous in this chapter. In verse eleven Jesus prays for the unity of the church, asking that it be comparable or at least that it approach the unity which obtains in the Godhead. In verse twenty we have the definite promise of the continuance of the Church until the end of time. Again in verse twenty-one the unity of the una sancta is asked even as we note its invisibility and its universality. The purpose of this unity is expressed as the winning of others for Christ. It goes without saying that this unity can only be achieved through the sincere and entirely faithful acceptance of all the teachings of Christ as they are revealed in the Scriptures. Any failure to change, revise or add to these teachings can only result in disunity and division.

As members of the invisible Church form for themselves visible churches they rightfully possess the rights and privileges which Christ bestowed upon the apostles. In this chapter the ministry of the Church, specifically the office of the holy ministry of the Gospel, is referred to often. In verse eighteen Jesus compares His own apostleship from the

Father with the sending of the apostles out to preach and teach the Gospel. He asks that they be consecrated in their office. He asks that their work be marked with a singleness of purpose and unity which would give evidence to the world of their Savior and their divine calling.

Here we might refer to what dogmaticians call the unio mystica. This is the mystical union which is brought about through the Gospel and consists in the intimate fellowship and communion between the believer and his Savior. The real nature of this union is described and defined in verse twenty-two. It is one of the objects of the work of the holy ministry that believers be closely united in love and service to their Savior. Other Scriptural references which immediately come to mind are the eighth chapter of Romans, II Peter 1:4; II Corinthians 3:18; I John 3:2. The imputation of glory which believers share from Christ unites them ever the more closely to Him in a spiritual relationship which approaches the relationship between the Father and the Son (verse twenty-two). Believers, therefore, are made participants in the divine nature of Christ. They become Christians, "little Christs". They become sons of God, John 1:12. In verse twenty-three Jesus elaborates on the complete realization of the mystical union, showing that it is a union more complete than any relationships in the human sphere. It is a perfection toward which Christians strive with one end in view, that the world may believe that Christ is the Son of God and that God has expressed His matchless love through the sending of His Son to redeem the world.

All believers, with the ministry included, find themselves involved in a lifelong battle against the devil, the world and the flesh.

It is this struggle which leads dogmaticians to describe the Church on earth as the Church Militant. The hatred of the world which Jesus mentions in the chapter, the preservation of the disciples from evil and the prayer for unity all presupposes the ceaseless warfare which the Church must carry on in maintaining its existence in a world that is antagonistic to its teaching and its King. After this battle has been victoriously completed, first for the individual, finally for the whole "Christian Church" there will emerge the Church Triumphant to which Jesus makes reference when He asks that all believers be with Him to behold His glory forever (verse 24).

In the last division of this branch of theology we consider the doctrine of predestination which is also known as the election of grace. While it is true that the statement in verse nine does not specifically define this teaching as clearly as does the first chapter of Ephesians, whereby we believe that God has elected in Christ a certain definite number for salvation prompted only by His grace in Christ, and in due time calls, sanctifies, preserves them unto eternal life, it is nonetheless certain that when Jesus makes a distinction between the world and His disciples in the prayer stating that He is praying for the one and not the world He adds to our knowledge and teaching of the election of grace. Some have objected that verse twelve is credited with a reference to this doctrine, since it mentions Judas as being given to Christ and yet being lost. But a comparison of verse nine with verse eleven shows that the election did not include Judas and need not therefore be ruled out in verse twelve. Lenski explains, "Usually, however, Judas is taken to be 'the sad exception' (Bengel) in whom

all the guarding and protecting of Jesus failed...But this is not correct. Judas is not an exception, he was never given to Jesus by the Father."¹¹⁷ These references in the chapter to the election of grace add to its doctrinal richness and indicate how many different teachings the Lord Jesus has compressed into these few words which are under consideration.

F: Eschatology.

The teaching of Holy Scripture concerning the end of temporal life, the second advent of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, final judgment, the consummation of all things, the everlasting damnation of the wicked and the eternal bliss of the just in the world to come is known to dogmaticians as eschatology.¹¹⁸

Verse twenty-four sets before the Bible scholar the prayer of Jesus that His faithful followers be with Him, wherever He is, to behold His glory. Since death, temporal death, is known to be an experience through which all must pass, with the exception of those who remain alive at the Lord's coming, this verse of the chapter presumes a resurrection of the dead if they are to be with Christ, alive, beholding His glory forever and ever. The teaching of the resurrection of the dead therefore may be inferred from this verse.

Similarly the reference in verse two to the authority which Christ has over all flesh includes His authority for final judgment. The latter part of that same verse in speaking of His bestowing of eternal life likewise is properly understood to have an eschatological meaning.

In verse twelve we have noted repeatedly the reference to Judas as the son of perdition. Jesus refers to him as being "lost" or

117. Lenski, op. cit., p. 1139.

118. Graebner, op. cit., p. 225.

literally, "perished". Parallel Scripture passages to this event are Psalm 41:10; Psalm 109:8; Romans 14:14; Matthew 23:15. In this reference from the chapter therefore, Jesus shows that there is such an estate as eternal damnation and that even one who was very near to Him during His earthly life has inherited this estate, since he did not possess saving faith.

In all dogmatical works, with few exceptions, the last teaching which comes up for consideration is the doctrine of Holy Scripture regarding eternal life. The verses which are applicable to this teaching from this chapter are: 2, 3, 13, and 24. We have discussed them under other sections from other points of view. It is necessary therefore, only briefly to rehearse their applicability to this final section of eschatology.

We note that verse two ascribes to Jesus the power to bestow eternal life, complete happiness in heaven, including fellowship with the Father, Son and Spirit for all eternity. In verse three Jesus describes at once the nature and method of apprehension of eternal life when He says, "Now this is the eternal life, that they know you as the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Plainly eternal life already begins as soon as saving faith is created in the heart of the individual believer. Here on earth we know in part the true God through the revelation of His Son, Jesus Christ. Yonder in eternity we shall know Him fully and completely, even as we also are known. Knowing God is therefore the nature of eternal life and this believing knowledge is also the mode of receiving it.

Lastly, the prayer of Jesus includes a petition that the disciples would experience the fullness of joy which He had known and that they might be with Him in all eternity to behold His glory. In that connection He asks that the Father make known to them His great love toward them so that they might ultimately reach the goal of eternal life. The indescribable blessedness which these and similar expressions regarding everlasting life contain beggar description. Words simply cannot convey the full meaning of this passage or others, for example, Paul's reference in First Corinthians to Isaiah 64 verse 4, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Summary of the Doctrinal Study

In this portion of this treatise the writer has attempted to trace briefly the teachings of Holy Scripture which are found in the Sacramental Prayer. We began with Christ in eternity, carried Him through His earthly life, the work of reconciliation, continued with the establishment of the church, the office of the holy ministry, the preservation of the Church to the end of time, the final judgment, the damnation of the wicked and the everlasting bliss of the faithful. Plainly this chapter begins in eternity and ends in eternity. In these few words of John's Gospel, Chapter Seventeen, the Savior has given us what might be termed the most brief dogmatics in all Christian literature. Only the articles of faith which are of lesser import have been omitted. All of the major teachings of the Scriptures are included. It would be simple to write volumes on the doctrinal content of this chapter, but we have contented ourselves with a summary sketch in an effort to show the richness of these few simple monosyllabic words which the Savior uttered just before His entrance upon the final phase of His earthly work.

Conclusion

In summing up the contents of this paper it is unnecessary to write an extended conclusion to the material which has gone before. The purpose of this paper has been to make a thorough exegetical and doctrinal study of the Sacerdotal Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ. It has been the writer's endeavor to stand aside from the scene, to let the simple words of the Savior speak for themselves. The simplicity with which John gives us this prayer of Jesus, simple language coupled with the deepest thoughts of all theology, makes it one of the greatest treasures of Scripture. All the major teachings of the Scriptures are contained in this chapter.

Individually the verses preach powerful, doctrinal sermons on the loftiest concepts of God and His love. Taken together, they form a whole of Bible teaching that no other chapter in Scripture can duplicate. Some of these words of Jesus may well take volumes to explain, but the language is so simple, mostly monosyllabic words even in our English translation, that even a little child can grasp it.

The writer has deemed it a privilege to be able to visit for an extended period of time in the holy of holies of Scripture. May the Spirit of God grant His grace to translate this visit into the realities of living and preaching the Word of God all the more powerfully, convincingly, successfully. May He grant that those who read these words be preserved in His wondrous grace in Christ until the time when this voice of the Son of God is heard again and when all the faithful will be called to live together with Him in eternity, knowing Him face to face, who prayed these words some nineteen centuries ago.

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