

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: Teach Us to Pray
Title: Let My People Stand Strong
Speaker: Steve Berg
Text: John 17:6-19
Date: November 11, 2018



WARM-UP

Can you tell a story about being trained or coached by someone in a job or responsibility, but the time has now come for you to do the job on your own. What was going on in your thoughts and emotions? What did you learn launching out on your own?

DISCUSSION

Jesus is standing in the shadow of the cross when He prays this prayer. The disciples are subdued and terrified. They have sensed that something significant is changing. He has told them that He is leaving and their hearts are distressed with fear and uncertainty. Jesus prays to the Father so His disciples will hear His intercession for them. He expresses His confidence that His mission is accomplished. "Father, I have made them my disciples." He expresses His love and concern for His own people. "Father, let my people stand strong."

1. Jesus points out to the Father what His years of teaching and training has brought about in making these men, His people (disciples). In verses 6-8, what has Jesus done in their lives? What is Jesus' reason for interceding for His people (read v 9-10)?
2. Jesus prays about these things in the past tense - like making these men His disciples has already been accomplished. Why does Jesus pray this even before His disciples have become what they will fully be? How can Jesus speak confidently about them - as though they have already attained their maturity and destiny? What is this confidence in Christ's people that Paul also teaches us (read Romans 8:28, Philipians 1:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:23)?
3. Jesus has completed His work - His mission is accomplished - and He is now leaving the world and returning to the glory of the Father in heaven. He intercedes for the disciples who remain in the world... "Father, let my people stand strong."

I have suggested that Jesus asked the Father to do four things:

- Let them stand strong in unity (11-12)
- Let them stand strong in joy (13)
- Let them stand strong against the evil one (14-16)
- Let them stand strong in the world (17-19)

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DISCUSSION

- ⇒ Put in your own words what you believe Jesus is asking the Father to do for His people?
- ⇒ In your experience, how has the Father answered that prayer in the church?
- ⇒ In your experience, how is the church still far away from the prayer that Jesus prayed?
- 4. Jesus continues to pray this prayer to the Father for His people (read Hebrews 7:25). In a sense, like the first disciples, we can still hear Jesus praying this prayer for us. Pray this prayer together, and hear Jesus praying over you.

PRAYER

1. Father, I thank you that Jesus has made me one of His people because...
2. Father, I pray that You will help your people to stand strong in unity...
3. Father, I pray that You help me to stand strong against the evil one...
4. Father, turn my heart with love and compassion toward the world...