

GOSPEL OF JOHN 17 C (14-21)

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.

The Kingdom of God has come into the world through the death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement of Christ and the giving of the Spirit at Pentecost. Christians consider themselves citizens of the New Jerusalem and live by the Holy Spirit in the Age to come – His Kingdom. This is realized every time we assemble by making the church or Christ present on earth.

15 “I do not make request that You should take them out of the world, but that You should guard them from the evil (RSV – ‘evil one’)

The ablative case with ἐκ, but can mean the evil man, Satan, or the evil deed (OT New Testament)

Saint Chrysostom: “What Christ says to the Father,...‘You should guard them from evil,’ He means from moral badness (κακίας), vice, and faint-heartedness.” [Hom. 1 on Gal., P.G. 61:664 (col. 618).] Elsewhere he writes: “He does not speak merely of delivering them from dangers, but also with regard to their continuance in the faith.” [Hom. 82, P.G. 59:483 (col. 443).]

16 “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 “Sanctify them in Your truth; the word which is Yours is truth.

Saint Chrysostom: “‘Sanctify them in (ἐν) Thy truth,’ that is, ‘Make them holy through the gift of the Spirit and right doctrines.’ As when He says, ‘You are clean by reason of the word which I have spoken to you [Jn. 15:3],’ so now He says the same thing, ‘Instruct them, teach them the truth.’...For speaking right doctrines concerning God does sanctify the soul. And if He says they are sanctified by the word, cease marveling. And that it is regarding doctrine that He speaks, He adds, ‘The word which is Yours is truth.’... For know that the word of God is also to cleanse. But the ‘sanctify them,’ also seems to me to manifest another thing like, ‘Set them apart (consecrate) for the word and for the preaching.’ And this is manifest from that which follows.” [Hom. 82, P.G. 59:483, 484 (col. 443).]

Saint Basil: “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit alike hallow, quicken, enlighten, and comfort. No one will attribute a special and peculiar energy of hallowing to the energy of the Spirit, after hearing the Savior say, ‘Sanctify them in Your name [cf. Jn. 17:11, 17].’ Likewise, all other energies are equally performed, in those worthy of them, by the Father and by the Son and by the Holy Spirit—that is, every grace, virtue, guidance, life, consolation, change into the immortal, the passage into freedom, and all other good things which come down to man.”

18 “Even as You did send Me forth into the world, I also sent them forth into the world.

Saint Chrysostom: “It was His custom to speak of the future as having come to pass.” [Hom. 82, P.G. 59:484 (col. 443).]

19 “And on behalf of them I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. [Jn. 17:14-19]

Saint Chrysostom: “What is ‘I sanctify Myself’ (Εγὼ ἀγιάζω Ἐμαυτόν)? He means, ‘I offer to You a sacrifice.’ In Old Testament times, sanctification was typologically (foreshadowing) indicated by the sheep. But now it is not in type but in truth itself. Therefor he says, ‘That they may be sanctified in your truth.’ ‘For I both dedicate them to You and make them an offering.’ This He says, either because their Head (Christ) was being made so, or because they too would be sacrificed. For, ‘Present,’ it says, ‘your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, [Rom. 12:1].’ And, we were counted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Cyril of Alexandria: “Christ called down upon us the ancient gift of humanity, that is, sanctification through the Spirit and communion with the divine nature, His disciples being the first to receive it.”

Saint Ambrose: “The Lord said this in order that you may acknowledge that He is both sanctified in the flesh for us, and sanctifies by virtue of His divinity.” [*Of the Christian Faith*, Bk. II, Ch. IX(78), in *Nicene*, 2nd Ser., X:234.]

Blessed Theophylact: “This verse not only means deliverance from dangers, but also concerning constancy and steadfastness in the faith, which is why He subsequently utters, ‘Sanctify them in the truth [Jn. 17:17].’” [P.G. 124:731C (col. 236).]

²⁰“And I do not make request for these only, but also for those who shall believe on Me through their word; ²¹“in order that all may be one, even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world might believe that You did send Me forth.

Saint Chrysostom: “But what is, ‘in Us’ (ἐν Ἡμῖν)? In the faith which is in Us. For since nothing so causes stumbling blocks to all as to be divided, He provided that they should be one....For all who believe through the apostles are one, though some from among them were torn away.” [Ib., P.G. 59:484 (col. 444).]

¹¹And He gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some shepherds and teachers, ¹²for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of ministering, to the building up of the body of the Christ, ¹³**until we all might come to the unity of the faith, and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ ...** speaking the truth in love, we might grow up into Him in all things Who is the head—the Christ, ¹⁶from Whom all the body, being joined and knit together... [Eph. 4:11-16]

Saint Chrysostom: “‘To the unity of the faith’ (εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως). That is, until we shall be shown to have all one faith. For this is unity of faith, whenever we all are one, whenever we shall all alike acknowledge the common bond. Till then you must labor to this end. If for this you have received a gift, that you might build up others, look well that you overturn not yourself, by envying one another....For tell me not of the difference of the spiritual gifts, but that all had one work. Now when we shall all believe alike then shall there be unity; for that this is what he calls ‘a perfect man’ (ἄνδρα τέλειον), is plain....By ‘stature’ (ἡλικίας), here he means perfect knowledge. For as a man will stand sure, whereas children are carried about and waver in mind, so it is also with believers.”

Saint Symeon the New Theologian: “All those who are foreknown by God must be born, come into

being, before the world beyond our world, the world of the Church, of the Firstborn, of the heavenly Jerusalem, is filled up. Then shall the end come and the fullness of the body of Christ be complete, through those who are foreordained by God to become conformed to the image of His Son.