

# OpenTheo

## John 17



### **Gospel of John** - Steve Gregg

In this discourse, Steve Gregg reflects on John 17, known as the high priestly prayer of Jesus. Gregg explores the themes of unity, suffering, and knowing God, emphasizing the importance of relational love and spiritual fellowship. He also delves into the meaning of glory and the distinction between the faithful remnant and the world. Through his insightful analysis of this prayer, Gregg highlights the essential truths that unite Christians and invites us to embrace the unity of the Spirit.

### **Transcript**

John 17 is unique and stands out, and should immediately ring a bell, in that it is what most people call the high priestly prayer of Jesus. Now, there's no real mention of him being a high priest here, nor for that matter anywhere else in scripture except in Hebrews. The book of Hebrews is the only book of the Bible that mentions Jesus being a high priest.

That is, in fact, the unique contribution of that book to our Christology, that Jesus is the great high priest after the order of Melchizedek. But, although the term priestly or high priestly is not found in this book, we see Christ making intercession for his people at length in this chapter. The entire chapter is devoted to his prayer.

It is his final prayer for his disciples before his crucifixion, just as the previous chapters 13 through 16 were his final discourse to his disciples before his crucifixion. And so, we don't know exactly where they are while he's praying. At the end of chapter 14, when they were in the upper room, Jesus said, And we have not committed to the issue of whether they left the room at that moment or started getting ready to leave.

And he continued to talk through chapters 15 and 16. But, it's a good chance that he prayed this prayer as he was walking to Gethsemane with the disciples, though we don't know. It was certainly either in the upper room or on the way to Gethsemane.

And Jesus spoke these words, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. As you have given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him.

And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I have glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do.

And now, O Father, glorify me together with yourself, with the glory which I had with you before the world was. Now, the reference to the glory that Jesus had before the world was, is something that John has mentioned at the very beginning of the book. He has not really used the word glory in the opening words of the book.

He said in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. And he talks about how in him was life, and that life was the light of men. Light and glory are definitely related concepts in scripture.

Glory often has the meaning of radiance. And so, Jesus, before his incarnation, was the radiance, the light, that it says in John 1.9, enlightens every man that comes into the world. And then in John 1.14, it says, and the word was made flesh and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory.

The glory as of the only begotten of the Father. So, we can see the glory of Jesus existed before the world was, in the form of God. But, he was made flesh, and John said, well, we saw that glory, we beheld his glory.

But, it was not like a full on glory, like seeing God exactly straight on. It was more like seeing the image of a father in his son. In fact, that's how John 1.14 should read.

Although, our translations say, we beheld his glory as of the glory of the only begotten of the Father. The only begotten of the Father. The words the, the definite article are not found in the Greek of that verse.

And so, it can be rendered the glory as of an only begotten of a father. He's being more generic, and saying just as you can often see the likeness of a father in his own son. So, we could see the likeness of the glory of God in looking at Jesus.

Now, nobody can see God and live, no one can see his glory full on and live. That's what God told Moses when Moses said, Lord, show me your glory. And, God said, that can't happen.

I can show you only the back parts. But, we got the best revelation of the glory of God that men can see in Jesus. In Hebrews 1.3, it says that Jesus is the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person.

So, Jesus was as much the image of God as we could hope to see in this world. And, he was the brightness of God's glory. And so, that's the glory that actually was seen in him.

But, the glory that was not seen was the glory he had before. He was veiled in a

tabernacle of flesh. He was the glory of God before.

And then, he was tabernacled and a veiled disclosure of God's glory was seen in him. As people saw Jesus, they saw the glory of God. But, not as it had been.

And, he's praying that his glory that he had had before he came to earth will be restored to him. Now, I don't know exactly, and I don't know if anyone can know exactly, what that means with reference to his incarnation. Because, there's some question as to whether the incarnation changed Jesus eternally, permanently.

Or, whether it was in a sense a more or less temporary situation, at least in some respects. His body that came out of the grave resurrected was a glorified body. And, it would appear that Jesus retains that body.

He still had the holes in his hands and his feet. So, we know it's the same body, but it had taken on a glorified form. Now, when he went into heaven, we don't know if he was, as it were, reabsorbed into the Godhead.

Or, whether he remained individual in a body. Of course, we have the imagery in the Bible of him sitting down at the right hand of God the Father. And, the imagery is of course him sitting a little bit to the right of his Father on a decorated chair, a throne.

But, that imagery may be an accommodation to us. I don't know that God the Father has a body. He's a spirit.

And, I don't know what the form Jesus is in, in heaven is. Whether they sit on a chair, or whether sitting on a throne is simply an image of sovereignty, an image of rulership. And, all we're really being told is that he went back to his Father.

And, became, as it were, one with his Father in the sense that he had been before. He knew what that meant. The disciples listening and recording this couldn't possibly know.

And, even we, who know more than they did at the moment, because we now have received the Holy Spirit, and they had not yet. And, we have all the theology of the later epistles, which they didn't have to read. Yet, we still don't fully understand what it means that God restored to him the glory that he had before.

And, that is something that will perhaps, at least permanently throughout this life, elude our comprehension and elude our ability to explain or analyze. But, it is obvious that Jesus had finished his work on earth and was ready to reassume his former glory. And, he's praying now that the Father will glorify him.

Now, Jesus was going to glorify the Father. And, that's what he says in verse 1. Glorify your son that your son may also glorify you. Jesus didn't come to glorify himself.

He came to honor and to glorify his Father. And, he was going to now glorify his Father

by surrendering his life and being offered up as an atonement for sins. And, then he would be glorified by the Father in his resurrection.

Now, Jesus would not cease to glorify his Father after that because Jesus exists only to glorify his Father. That's all he wants to do. And, so the fact that Jesus wants only to glorify his Father is a strong argument that that's the right thing for any human being to do.

Everyone should have that as the obsession to glorify God. When Paul said in Philippians chapter 2, the day will come when every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. He says that will be to the glory of God the Father.

In the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus said, let your light shine before men that they may see your good works. He said, and they will glorify your Father which is in heaven. Our works, our goal, all that we hope to accomplish is hopefully the same as what Jesus hoped to accomplish.

That God would be glorified in him. And, Jesus is glorified by the Father and the Father is glorified by Jesus. As we will find later on in this prayer, he prays that we too will be glorified and that we will share in the glory.

Because in verse 22 of this prayer he says, and the glory which you gave me I have given them that they may be one as we are one. In verse 24 he says, Father I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which you have given me. Now, John said in John 1.14 that we beheld his glory.

But here Jesus is praying that his disciples will behold his glory. And, apparently he means in the unveiled form that we will see him when we are with him, when we pass from this life and see him as he is, unveiled. Now, in verse 2, Jesus continuing the same sentence from verse 1, he says, as you have given him authority over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him.

Now, there is a number of concepts here that are coming up that were brought up earlier in the gospel of John. In John chapter 5, John 5.26 Jesus said, for as the Father has life in himself, so he is granted to the Son to have life in himself. And has given him authority to execute judgment because he is the Son of Man.

And in verse 21 of that same chapter, chapter 5 verse 21, for as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom he will. Now, God has given Jesus the authority that God himself has to give life to whoever he wants to. And that is what he says here in verse 2 of our present chapter.

That you have given him authority over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many, in John it says as many as he wishes, as Jesus wishes. Here it is as many as the Father has given him. Now, those that the Father has given him is a concept that we

encountered back in chapter 6 a number of times.

And it is a concept that is often been, I believe, misunderstood. Sometimes, just in order to fulfill a theological agenda, certain ideas are imported into this. For example, in John chapter 6, verse 37, Jesus said, all that the Father gives me will come to me.

And the one who comes to me I will by no means cast out. Now, the ones that the Father gives to him will come to him. As you well know, there are many whose theology would say, well those that the Father has given him are those that are on some kind of a list.

That was made before the beginning of the world that God chose to save some and not others. And those that he chose to include in the register are those who are called the elect, the chosen ones. And that they are the ones that God has given him.

So that the whole expression, those that God the Father has given me, is simply in the mind of some persons a set number of individuals that cannot be added to or subtracted from, who before they were ever born were allowed to be on the list to be saved. And they are therefore given to God out of the world. However, in John 6, verse 37, there is reason to suggest that that could be understood differently.

Because it says in 6, verse 37 of John, all that the Father gives me will come to me. And down in verse 45, at the end of verse 45, it says, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Now those that the Father gives to Jesus are the ones who had already heard from and learned from the Father.

Now on what occasion had they done that? Well, they were Jews. These were faithful remnant people. These were people who were raised in the religion of Yahweh.

And as many Jews had in fact been faithful to Yahweh before Jesus came. They had heard from Him and they had been obedient to Him and had heard and learned. Remember in the previous chapter to this, at the end of John 5, Jesus said to the Pharisees that they had not heard Moses.

In fact, it would be Moses that would stand up and accuse them because they did not believe Moses. He says, for if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me. That is, in Israel there were those who were true believers.

The faithful remnant. They did believe the law and the prophets. And Jesus said, well, if you believe Moses, you believe in me.

Because those who already were disposed toward God favorably in Israel were the ones that God gave to Jesus. And they came to believe in Jesus. Not because they had been on a list somewhere, but because of where their hearts were at.

They were people whose hearts were already believers in Yahweh. Believers in the

earlier revelation given by Moses. Remember in Luke chapter 16, in the story of Lazarus and the rich man.

What is the main idea of that story? People draw all kinds of theology from it about hell and things like that. But actually, the story has one primary message, it would appear. And that is the last line.

This man who had died unprepared to meet God, and he found himself in the flames of Hades, wished that he could go back and warn his brothers. So that they had not yet died, and he didn't want them to die unprepared like he did, and come to the same place. So he said, send Lazarus back to warn my brothers.

And Abraham said to him, they have the law and the prophets. They're Jewish. They've got the scriptures.

And the man said, yeah, but they don't believe the law and the prophets. But they'll believe if a man comes back from the dead. And Abraham said, if they don't believe in the law and the prophets, then they won't believe even if a man rises from the dead.

In other words, the ones who already in Israel had rejected the law and the prophets, who didn't believe, they also reject Christ, even after he rises from the dead. Him rising from the dead would not impress those who already have rejected the revelation God had given earlier through the law and the prophets. So Jesus said to his opponents, if you had believed Moses, you would believe me.

The people who came to Jesus were those who had previously had opportunity and used that opportunity to hear from and to learn from God through his word. And so in John 6 and verse 45, Jesus said, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. That is, they have previously, the Jewish people who had already responded faithfully to what God had said earlier and had heard and learned from him.

Now they were ready for the next step. The Father is going to turn them over to Jesus. They are the ones that the Father has given to him.

And Jesus makes that point clearly in John 17, in the verse after the one we last read. Because in John 17, verse 6, Jesus said, I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world. They were yours.

These people that God gave to him, they were already God's people. They weren't the devil's people. They weren't the children of the devil, as many of the Jews were, that Jesus spoke to in John 8, verse 44, and said, you are of your father, the devil.

Those aren't the ones that God gave. God gave to Jesus the people who were already God's people. And what made them God's people? They were faithful.

That's what makes anyone God's people, is having faith. And so these were the Jews who had faith before Jesus came. They were God's people already, and he gave them to Jesus.

He just transferred those that were already faithful to God under the old covenant, in that generation, he just transferred them to Christ's leadership. And gave them to him to be his sheep. Now, we didn't say much yet about verse 3 or 4, and that's a very important thing to talk about.

In verse 3, he said, this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. Now, this first line, this is eternal life, that, can be taken two different ways. The way that I'm most accustomed to hearing it preached, and I suppose it's the way that I most naturally have taken it too, is that he's saying, this is eternal life, that they know you, in other words, knowing you is how people have eternal life.

That to know God is to have eternal life. Now, it's also possible for him to say, this is eternal life, so that the result will be that they will know you. It could go either way.

This is eternal life, so that, that is the life that I give to my people, it's eternal life, so that they can know you. It could even imply in that case that knowing God is something that will take forever to learn all about. The depths of God, they may take eternity to penetrate and to get to know him that thoroughly.

But we'll have that much time, because the life he gives is eternal life, so that they may know him. You know, Paul said in Ephesians that through the endless ages, God will make known to his people what is the glory of his inheritance to them, and so forth. That, you know, we might think that once Jesus comes back, we'll suddenly know it all.

I think that we're going to be learning more about the depths of God and of Christ throughout eternity. I think there's that much to know, that much to learn. And so Jesus might be saying, this life that I'm giving to those that you've given me, that life is eternal life, so that they can know you, and Jesus Christ whom you've sent.

The idea being, knowing him is the result of having eternal life. Now, the other way it's taken, and more commonly taken, is that eternal life is the result of knowing him. That is, I have given them life, and this life is in the form of knowing you, Father.

This is eternal life. This is the life I've given them. It can be defined as knowing you.

Knowing God is eternal life. So, as many things in the Gospel of John are that Jesus said, they look like they can be taken two different ways. I think it's more common to take it this way, that knowing God results in eternal life.

It would follow, then, that as you can know God by degrees, to a greater or lesser degree

of intimacy, so also the eternal life that consists in knowing him can be more intense or less intense, more full or less full, corresponding to your knowledge of him. That's what Christian life is. It's a relationship with God, which, like any long-term relationship you have with another person, results in deeper and deeper awareness of what makes that person tick, greater and greater intimacy, more and more experiences shared together, a closer and closer friendship, and better acquaintance.

A relational love increases with time, and the increase is in depth. The quality of our life with God, therefore, can increase with the increased quality of our knowledge of God. Remember what Paul said in Philippians chapter 3, verse 7, and he says, But what things were gained to me, he means the advantages he had in terms of his Jewish birth and education, and religious accomplishments in the Jewish faith before his salvation, those things that were gained to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

He actually considers that they were more of a loss than a gain. Why? Well, probably because he was so self-righteous. He was of pure Jewish birth of the tribe of Benjamin.

He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He was a stickler for keeping the law, and like most of the Pharisees, he was proud of that. And so, what may have seemed like a gain to his way of thinking was actually a detriment, a loss.

And he says, I have counted it for the loss that it is. Why? For Christ. He says, But indeed, I do count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.

Why? So that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death. Paul is a person who knows God. But he says, I have counted all that I knew before, and all that I had before, I've counted that as dung, and as loss, so that I could know him, and apparently continue to know him, and know him even more, through his exhibition of his power, the power of his resurrection in my life, and also through the fellowship of suffering with him.

Suffering with someone is a very deep kind of fellowship which bonds people, or at least potentially can bond people very much. In 2 Peter chapter 1, there's a number of things that Peter says about knowing God, and he's obviously not talking about intellectually knowing theology. He's not talking about knowing the Bible.

He's talking about knowing God. Many people know the Bible, and because they know the Bible, they assume they know God. Because they know about God.

They know theology. And it's a huge difference, on the one hand, to know a lot about



God, and be able to quote the theological descriptions of God accurately, and know all those big theological words about God's nature and character, but it's another thing to actually have a relationship where you know him, just as you might read biographies of famous people, and know about as much as you can know about them. I've read five biographies of George Mueller.

I've read probably three or four biographies of Sundar Singh. I really admire these men. I feel like I know a lot about them.

But I've never met them. They were dead before I was born, and I've never really been able to have a chance to be acquainted with them. I feel like I know them, but of course they don't know me, because we've never met, and they've never read my biography.

And so we don't have a relationship. I can benefit from knowing about them, I can be inspired by what I know, but knowing them personally would be an entirely different phenomenon. That they know what I'm going through, and they know how I think about things, and we have a mutual knowledge.

That kind of knowledge is different than just knowledge about. And so frequently, the word knowledge in 2 Peter is epagnosis, which means a full knowledge. It's talking about something, a deep acquaintance, not just an intellectual apprehension of facts.

And Peter addresses his second epistle in 2 Peter 1. It says in verse 1, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge, epagnosis, of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. Now Jesus said in John 17.3, This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. And Peter says, yes, I'm praying that you will have more grace, more peace multiplied, increased in your life, in the context of your growing knowledge of God and of Jesus.

As his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him. That is through this intimate acquaintance with him, all things come to us, all things necessary for life and godliness. He has given us, through his divine power, all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him, who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.

Now the divine nature, the character and the nature of God, imparted through the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, we partake of that through the knowledge of God that comes through the great revelation of his promises and so forth that he has given. And not just reading the promises, but experiencing his faithfulness to keep his promises. Peter's relationship with God was certainly not that of a theologian, a book learning theologian.

He was someone who had walked with Jesus, and then after Jesus left the Holy Spirit came upon him and revealed things to him. He was on the rooftop at Joppa, he had visions of God, he had an ongoing increasing knowledge of Jesus. And he said that by this comes the divine nature, by this comes to me all things necessary for life and godliness, by this grace and peace are multiplied to me.

There's a deepening of one's eternal life, there's a deepening of one's experience of God's life. And the divine nature that comes with greater knowledge of God and of Jesus. And this greater knowledge comes, as Paul said, as we saw in Philippians 3.10, that I might know him in the power of his resurrection, which would mean, I believe, since he is resurrected and there's a newness of life, there's a new glorified, new covenant kind of phenomenon of eternal life that comes through the resurrection of Christ, that resurrection life that we experience by being regenerated, and in the fellowship of his sufferings, means that as I suffer more with him, he and I fellowship in those sufferings all the more.

It says in the Old Testament of God with Israel, it says in all their affliction, he was afflicted. And Jesus said, inasmuch as you do it to the least of these my brethren, you've done it to me. If someone persecutes a Christian, they're persecuting Jesus, and he's going through it along with you.

Going through those things and finding God close to you, finding God's comfort come to you in those times, is an experience that deepens your actual knowledge of God, that is, acquaintance knowledge of God, deepens your intimate knowledge of God. Now, Jesus said, this is what eternal life is, that they might know God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. So, knowing God is really not like knowing anyone else, because you can know any number of people, and it doesn't impart to you a different species of life, doesn't impart to you a different quality of life.

Your quality of life can improve, perhaps by sitting under the right kind of professors in school and so forth, and learning important things, your quality of life can improve, but the species of life remains the same. It's not divine life. Eternal life is life from the eternal God.

It is life in Christ, as we read in 1 John 5.11, where John said, this is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life. And it says, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

So, eternal life is what God has given to us, and that life is in Jesus. It is not a life that we would have otherwise. And if you have the Son, you have that life.

If you don't, then you don't. So, this is what Jesus came to give, that which enables us to share in his life, in his experiences, our whole life becomes an intimate relationship with God. Which is why, of course, Christians are so fond of saying, Evangelicals are fond of

saying, Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship.

And I know that I grew up in a religious environment where that was a head nod, or, you know, we all agree, Christianity is not a religion, but a relationship. But I think people who use those words, maybe they didn't know what kind of meaning to attach to them, because many of those people still had a religion. And many who said they had a relationship with Jesus were simply using a cliché.

It seemed evident that they didn't have a very committed relationship in some cases, they weren't obedient to him in many cases. They said they had a relationship with him, but what kind of relationship? Knowing him as your Lord, knowing him as the one whom you are fully submitted to and fully trusting, like children do toward their father in best case scenarios, as wives do to their husband in best case scenarios. Trusting completely, submitting completely, enjoying completely.

Those analogies of relationships, family relationships, are the ones that the Bible itself chooses to be metaphors of our relationship with God. It changes. As we know him, we become fruitful in that eternal life which he gives.

I'm sure you've noticed that when the Bible opens up in Genesis and starts talking about the intimate relations between a man and a woman, the word that's used is know. Adam knew his wife and she conceived. David had Abishag in his bed with him when he was an old man, but he never knew her.

This euphemism of knowing in the Bible is frequently used of sexual intimacy. You might wonder whether it's a different word for know. It is not.

It's the ordinary word in the Hebrew language for knowing things and knowing people. It's not like a special form of that word. It is a picture of Christ in the church, of course, as Paul said.

And when we know him, that's when he reproduces himself in us. The life of Christ is being reproduced in us. Paul said to the Galatians in Galatians 4.19, he said, Oh, my little children with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.

Christ is being formed in us as a baby is formed in the womb of a woman. As Christ was formed in the womb of Mary. It's an analogy of what happens spiritually with us.

He is formed in us. His life is reproduced in us. And through the same means, the word comes and takes on flesh in us.

So that this is the mystery of what Jesus came to bring. It's not a religion. It's a unique experience with God.

That isn't just a thing that takes place at conversion. It is the way we walk and live the

rest of our lives. We're walking not alone.

We're walking with him. And he is our guide. He's our Lord.

He's our comforter. He's everything to us. Just as if we had an ordinary human friend there in that position.

But obviously much better than what any human could provide. That's knowing God. It is what eternal life is about.

And he says in verse 4 of John 17, I have glorified you on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given me to do. Jesus reached this point in his life just before his death and said, OK, there's really nothing else for me to do here.

Except, of course, what he was just about to do. But it's interesting that there is at least one theological opinion out there that is widely held that Jesus didn't actually accomplish what he came to do. He came, they say, to establish the kingdom of God.

But that effort was thwarted because the Jews did not agree to it. This is the dispensational position, of course, that Jesus intended to establish the kingdom of God at his first coming. But the Jews rejected him and so it had to be postponed until his second coming.

Therefore, they say, the kingdom has not really been established. It will be when Jesus comes back and it will be identified with the millennium. Because Jesus intended and offered and proclaimed that the kingdom of God was at hand and it was going to be established.

But, sadly, he didn't find a cooperative Jewish people and therefore it didn't happen. Well, Jesus said, I have finished the work which you gave me to do. Did God give him the work of establishing the kingdom? He must have done it.

He must have finished it. It wasn't aborted. It wasn't postponed.

The project was not abandoned. He did the thing he was sent to do and that was to establish the kingdom of God. So, it would be certainly a mistake to think that he had come planning to or hoping to establish the kingdom and failed.

He does not indicate that he has had any failure whatsoever in accomplishing his mission. In verse 6 we saw, I have manifested your name to the men whom you have given me out of the world. They were yours and you gave them to me and they have kept your word.

Now they have known that all things which you have given me are from you. As they have come to understand that the things Jesus said are the things God gave him to say and that they are the things God wants them to know. They have come from the mouth

of Jesus.

And, you know, when you hear a teacher, a rabbi, and to the average person he looked like another Jewish rabbi. When you hear a rabbi or a teacher or a pastor expounding something, obviously they are professing to be telling you what God wants you to know. Or else they would not be speaking.

But you never really know for sure, you know, how much credibility, how much authority any given teacher has. And people had that question about Jesus too. Now what Jesus had said to them in John chapter 7 is, if anyone is willing to do God's will, then he will know my teaching, whether it is God or whether I speak on my own.

And these disciples were willing to do the will of the Father and therefore they had come to know that what he spoke was of God. And that's why Peter, when others left, said, where should we go? You alone have the words of eternal life. He knew that Jesus spoke from God.

And that's what Jesus says, they have come to know that. That the things which you have given me are from you. For I have given to them the words which you have given me.

And they have received them and have known surely that I came forth from you. And they have believed that you sent me. I pray for them.

I do not pray for the world. But for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. Now, I would just point this out.

Jesus said, I do not pray for the world. There are some who say that Jesus never had any concern for anyone but the elect. There's those ones again that God had in mind before the foundation of the world that he was going to save them and none others.

Those who say that also say that Jesus didn't die for the whole world. He died only for the elect. He only had a select group of people that he cared about.

And he wouldn't die for the others. No need. They weren't worth it.

They weren't God's choice. Now, sometimes in order to prove that, they bring this verse up. Where Jesus says, I don't pray for the world.

I just pray for those that you have given me. And the argument goes like this. If Jesus wouldn't even pray for people other than the elect, he certainly wouldn't die for people other than the elect.

I think that's a mistake. In this case, Jesus is not saying, I never would pray for the world. Of course he would pray for the world.

I mean, he loved the world. Because God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten son. And Jesus taught us to pray for the world.

He said, pray this way. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Well, God's will on earth being done as it is in heaven has got to require the world changing. It's got to require people in the world coming to know him and coming to submit to him. It's got to be praying for a lot more people than were currently believers at that time.

And when Jesus says, those who you've given me, he's talking about people that, he used the past tense. God had given him these people. He's not talking about some group of unnumbered multitudes that were elected before the foundation of the world that have not yet been given to him.

He's talking about the ones who are there in the room or walking in the street with him. The ones he has given them, that God has given Jesus, are the ones he's praying for here. He says, I'm not praying for the world, not this prayer.

This prayer is not for the world. Certainly praying for the world is the right thing to do. We're told to do so.

In 1 Timothy chapter 2 it says, I exhort that prayers and intercessions be made for all men. That's what Paul says in 1 Timothy 2 verse 1. Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

So Paul said pray for all men, including all rulers. Certainly not all of them are elect. Not all rulers are Christians.

So he's not talking about praying only for Christians. He said that kind of prayer for all people is good and acceptable to God, because God wants all men to be saved. So of course Jesus would pray for the world, but not in this prayer.

What he's saying is I'm not praying for the world, these particular petitions right now, I've got my disciples in mind, and I'm praying specific and unique things for them, that I would not pray for others who are not of their group. He says in verse 10, And all mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world.

Not quite. He's not quite gone yet, but he will be soon. Soon enough to speak this way.

But these are in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father, keep through your name

those whom you have given me, that they may be one, as we are. Now his prayer for them is, there's a few things he prays for them, but the one he repeats most frequently is this, that they would be one, even as we are.

Jesus had said back in chapter 10 of John, in verse 30, he had said, I and my Father are one. Now, I know that we who believe in the Trinity like to use that as a proof text for the deity of Christ, and for the Trinity, but it's not really necessarily a strong proof text for it. I do believe in the Trinity, and I believe that it's taught in Scripture, but that doesn't mean that every favorite proof text is really, you know, serves that doctrine as well as we'd like it to.

When Jesus said, I and my Father are one, I believe he's simply saying that he and his Father share in the same concerns. They're one in mind, one in heart, and they are one in other senses too, but in the context, I think he's talking about their singleness of purpose. And that's the way he prays for us to be one.

He says, I pray that they may be one as we are. He certainly isn't inviting us to be part of the Trinity. He's not saying, I'm one with the Father, and all of these people are one with the Father too, in that sense too, so you're all part of the Trinity.

That's not what one with him means in this case. Being one with each other has to do with the singleness of purpose. In fact, we see this very clearly in a number of later writings, for example, of Paul.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 10, Paul said, Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. This is the oneness that Jesus prayed for, and which Paul pleads with them to maintain. He says that you would be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.

And he says that you all speak the same thing. How could that be done? We now have 4,000 or more denominations, and they don't all speak the same thing. If they did, they wouldn't be separate denominations.

The reason they're separate is because they identify themselves by something a little more unique, something a little different from what others stand for. Because if you have two groups, that are two denominations, and they meet each other, and it turns out they believe everything the same, well then, they have to stop being two denominations, and I guess we're the same denomination. But each denomination has its own little aspects.

Maybe it has to do with church polity. Maybe it has to do with some theological point. But they don't all say the same thing.

That's why they exist in separate denominations. How could it possibly be that we would

ever come to the place where Paul argues that we should be, that we all speak the same thing? I wouldn't mind at all if all Christians said the same thing I said. I mean, I could even use Paul's words here.

There's a command of God, a command in the Scripture, that everyone say the same thing. So all you people need to toe the line and come and say the same thing I'm saying. But they could then say, well wait, Steve, I think everyone's supposed to say the same thing we're saying over in this denomination.

You guys all have to change and believe like us. And another group would say, no, we're willing to say all the same thing as long as you all want to say what we're saying. How do we get to a place where we all say the same thing when there's so many different groups that all think that the thing they're saying is what God says? And they're waiting for everyone else to come around and say what they're saying.

Can this even be done? Yes, it can. Because look what Paul is saying. After he says, I urge you, plead with you, to all say the same thing, he explains what he means.

He says in verse 12, Now I say this, that each of you says, I'm of Paul, or I'm of Apollos, or I'm of Cephas, or I'm of Christ. You're not all saying the same thing. You're saying four different things.

Some are saying I'm of Paul. Others are saying I'm of Cephas. Others are saying I'm of Apollos.

And some are saying I'm of Christ. Guess which thing everyone should be saying. You're all supposed to say the same thing.

Don't say four different things. Say one thing. And there's one of those things that's correct.

I'm of Christ. Now, preachers who like to say that there's no hope of us all saying the same thing, and they like to justify the perpetuation of denominational differences, they often try to misrepresent, or maybe they're not trying to misrepresent, maybe they're just misunderstanding what Paul's saying here. They say, Paul is saying that all these people are equally divisive, even those who say I'm of Christ.

I've never heard a preacher say this differently when they've talked about this passage. Some in Corinth were saying I'm of Paul. Some were saying I'm of Apollos.

Some were saying I'm of Cephas. And some were being hyper-spiritual and saying I am just of Christ. And all of them had a bad attitude.

But Paul didn't say they all had a bad attitude. He said there's four different things that people are saying, and they all need to start saying the same thing. Is there one of these



he approved of? Of course.

What's he saying in the next verse? Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? What's he saying here? No one should be saying I'm of Paul. Paul wasn't crucified for you. You weren't baptized in the name of Paul.

Now, who was crucified for you? And whose name were you baptized into? Oh, Christ. Then the people who said I'm of Christ are right. We're all of Christ.

Christ is the only one who died for you. Not Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, but Christ. So we're all of Christ.

That's the one thing everyone's supposed to say. Now, what if someone says, I still like Apollos' preaching better than Paul's. And I still think I agree with Peter more than Apollos and Paul.

Well, that's okay. You're just not of them. You're of Christ.

You don't all have to agree about everything. As long as you agree that we're all of Christ and we're all part of the same body and we're not going to act as if we're not. We are joined together in the same judgment.

That judgment is that our unity is not based on our sharing the same opinions. Our unity is based on having the same person having died for our sins and we've all been baptized into that same person. There is only one body and we are in Him.

And that's the oneness. Christians do not have to agree on every point in order to be one. Look at Ephesians 4. In Ephesians 4.3, Paul said that we should be endeavoring.

Ephesians 4.3, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And then he lists many things that all Christians have in common. He said there's one body and one Spirit.

You're all called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one hope, one baptism. One God.

All those things. There are no Christians who don't share those things. The things that Christians differ about are not those things.

They've got the same God, the same Christ, the same hope, the same faith, the same baptism. All have been baptized into Christ, not into something else. And so, he says, therefore we have unity in the Spirit and we need to keep the unity of the Spirit.

But look at verse 13. Until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, the church has to grow up into Christ. That's what he says in verse 15.

But speaking the truth in love, you may grow up in all things into Him, into Christ, who is the head. We have to grow up into Christ. We have to grow up into a mature body of Christ.

What's the maturity mark like? Our unity, our love for each other. Now, the time will come when we have, it says, we will come in the unity of the faith and the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God. That means we will have more agreement about what we believe and what we know than we have now.

That, he says, is future. That's an until then kind of a statement. But in verse 3, you now have and must keep the unity of the Spirit.

Christ has given the whole church unity in the Spirit. We have the same Spirit. And we are all part of one body.

And that is the unity that we are to maintain. And that's what Jesus prays in John 17 will happen. And that has happened, but Christians need to acknowledge it.

And that's what I think he is praying will happen too. He said in verse 11, that they may be one as we are. In verse 12, he says, while I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name.

Those whom you gave me, I have kept. And none of them is lost except the Son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. A reference to Judas.

None is lost but him. Of what? Of those that you gave me. So God gave Jesus 12, and 11 of them made it.

That means that you can be one of those that God gave him and be lost. Obviously, those that God gave him do not refer to some inviolable list that he made before the foundation of the world that would always be saved. Because Judas is named as one that God gave him.

At one time, Judas must have been part of a faithful remnant. But he went back. And he got lost.

But he was one of those that God gave him. Those that you gave me, I have lost none except the one. And he is one of those that you gave me.

Obviously, the Scripture had to be fulfilled. Now, does that mean that Judas had no choice in the matter? Because there was a Scripture that said that he would deny Christ, that he would betray Christ. Actually, there is no Scripture in the Old Testament that says that Judas Iscariot, by name, would betray Christ.

There are Scriptures that say the Messiah would be betrayed by someone he had eaten with, someone who was close to him, someone he had been friendly with. There were a

lot of people that fit that description. And any of them might have fulfilled the prophecy.

Judas is the one who chose to. Judas is the one who decided to defect. And, therefore, fulfilled the prophecy.

It had to happen that someone would do so. But the Scripture never said who it would be. It doesn't even say in the Old Testament, one of the twelve disciples will betray him.

It just says, he that ate food at my table, my familiar friend, has lifted up the heel against me. Jesus had lots of friends. It could have been Lazarus.

It could have been Mary or Martha. It could have been Mary Magdalene. It could have been almost anybody outside the Apostolic group as well as inside.

So, Judas was not singled out by the Scriptures to be the betrayer of Jesus. Judas volunteered for that position. There was a position open.

If it hadn't been him, it would be someone else. There were plenty of people who would probably like to cozy up to the power brokers in Jerusalem by getting paid to betray Jesus. Someone who had at one time been closer to him but had become disillusioned.

We know that a lot of people became disillusioned with him. Who had once thought great things about him. We know that when he fed the five thousand, he ate with them.

But they left him the next day. I don't think Judas was somehow singled out by God to be the bad guy. I think that God was going to deliver Jesus into the hands of somebody who had been close enough to him to betray him.

And Judas was the guy who ended up doing it. And this happened so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. Now, some would say, well, Judas is one person that God gave him that betrayed him and lost his salvation.

But that's a unique case because the Scripture had to be fulfilled. But if you are given to Christ otherwise, you can't fall away. Remember Jesus said in John 6, this is the will of him that sent me that of all that he gave me, I should lose nothing.

But should raise it up at the last day. That all the ones God gave him, God's will was that Jesus should lose none of them. That would apparently mean not even lose Judas.

God didn't want him to lose Judas. God's will was that Jesus would lose none of those that he gave him. But he did anyway because it's not strictly up to Jesus.

The people have a free choice too and Judas made a choice. But some would say, well, Judas is the only exception. No one else whom God has given to Jesus could ever fall away because they're all elect and Judas was elected to betray him.

Well, how do we know that there aren't others that are elected to betray him? After all, Paul said, in the last days, many shall depart from the faith. How do we know that I'm not one of them? Maybe I, who have been given to Jesus, will defect because it's predestined to fulfill scripture. That many must depart from the faith.

So maybe I'm just one of those that's predestined to depart from the faith too, like Judas. No, there's no one predestined to be an unbeliever. That's a choice.

The Bible doesn't ever say anyone was predestined by God to be a believer or an unbeliever. God has predestined certain things for believers, but he hasn't predestined who would be one. The Bible nowhere indicates, never uses the word predestination that way.

It's a strange thing that so many people who otherwise seem to be quite educated in scripture think that it does when you really can't find a scripture that speaks of it that way. Jesus said, but now I come to you and these things I speak in the world that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. He told them that too.

He said, these things I've spoken to you that your joy may be full. Earlier, I have given them your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world. He told them that too in John 15.

If you are of the world, the world would love its own. But because I've chosen you out of the world, the world hates you. So he's repeating these things only this time talking to the Father instead of to the disciples about these same concepts.

Just as I'm not of the world, I do not pray that you should take them out of the world. Why? The world hates us. It seems like getting out of the world away from people who hate us is a good idea.

But he says, I don't pray that you'll take them out of the world, but that you'll keep them from the evil one. Now, it seems strange, does it not, that the world is so hostile to us and yet God doesn't want to remove us from there. Jesus doesn't want to remove us from here.

It seems like Christians want him to remove us from here. A lot of Christians are just looking for nothing so much as the rapture to get us out of here. Jesus said, I'm not praying for that to happen.

I don't want them to go out of the world. Why not? Well, for a couple of reasons. One is the world needs us.

We're the light of the world. We're the salt of the earth. We're the evangelists.

We're the ones that are to bring the kingdom of Christ to the people in darkness. The

world needs us here. But there's another reason.

And that is that we need it. We need the trials. We need the opposition.

We need the battles. We need to grow up. And we need to learn things to be like Jesus who learned obedience through the things he suffered, the Bible says.

He was perfected through his sufferings. You think you're going to be perfected any easier than he was? The sufferings we have in the world are part of what we need to make us into what God wants us to become. That's what trials do.

They refine gold. The fire refines the gold, removes the dross. We need the world and its opposition to become what we must become.

And the world needs us. Jesus doesn't want to take us out of the world. People get saved and then they just want to get out of the world.

It's like, well, I got mine. I'm taking my marbles and going home. No, you got yours so that other people can get theirs.

And so God can get his. It's not all about you. And so this desire to quickly escape from the world is not really in agreement with Jesus' desire for the church.

I don't pray that you take them out of the world, but I do pray that you keep them from the evil one. You know, the word keep them from, there's two words in the Greek. It's ek, which means out of, and tereo, which means to guard.

To guard them out of the world or to guard them from. To guard them from something, keep them from something. These two words together, ek, tereo, occur only one other time in the Bible.

And that is in another writing by the same author. Which is Revelation chapter 3. In Revelation chapter 3 and verse 10, a promise is made to the church of Philadelphia. And in Revelation 3.10 he says, because you have kept my command to persevere, I also will keep you from, ek, tereo, the hour of trial which is to come upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.

Now many have said that this hour of trial which is to come on the world to test those who dwell on the earth is a reference to a future tribulation. I have reason to believe it may not be a reference to that, but some do think it is and they argue from it this way. Jesus told the Philadelphia church that he would keep them from the tribulation.

He says, because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming to test all those who dwell on the earth. So I was taught from this verse that this is a promise of a pre-tribulation rapture because the hour of trial is coming on the world, but Jesus is going to keep us from it. That's the promise.

Well, okay, suppose I agree that this is talking about the tribulation. Where does it say anything about a rapture here? He says he will keep them from it. Does that mean take them out of it? Well, the only other place that this expression keep from is found in the Bible.

It is from the same speaker, Jesus, and the same writer, John. In John 17:15 where it says, I pray that you will not take them out of the world, but you will keep them from. The wicked one, who is the one who inspires the world's hatred.

It does not mean take them out. It just means guard them while they are in. When God sent the plagues of Egypt, Israel was still in Egypt.

But he kept Israel from it. The plagues did not come upon Israel, they came upon Egypt, though they lived among the Egyptians. God, as Moses said, makes a distinction between Israel and the Egyptians.

And so he could keep Israel safe in the midst of a terrible judgment that came on the Egyptians. If God wished for Christians to be in the world during the tribulation, there would be no reason why he couldn't have them here and keep them from it. He knows how to aim the plagues.

He is not using a shotgun. He is a marksman. In Psalm 91, it says, a thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you.

Only with your eyes shall you behold the reward of the wicked. The wicked will fall at your right side by the thousands, but you won't be hit by it. Why? Because you have made the Lord your shelter, your refuge, it says.

There shall no harm come to you. So God is able to keep his people in the theater of battle, and yet protect them there. And that's what Jesus prays for.

He says, I don't pray that you take them out of the world. What good would that do? They need it, and the world needs them. But I do pray that you'll keep them from the wicked one.

Don't let them succumb to the wiles of the devil. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by your truth.

Your word is truth. Now what does sanctify mean? We usually think of sanctify as to change us into holier people on the inside than we were before. And that's probably a fair use of the word.

Although the word sanctify means to set apart. To set something apart for God. To make it holy.

Holy means set apart. If something is sanctified, like the priests, Aaron and his sons were

sanctified, and set aside and consecrated to be priests. Sanctify means they were set apart from others.

For a different purpose. And he's speaking about our relationship to the world. He says we are sanctified.

God, Father, sanctify them. Let us set them apart from the world. In what sense? Well you sanctify them by the truth.

That is the Christians possess the truth. His word is the truth. We have his word.

We believe his word. We possess and know the truth. That sets us apart from the world because they don't.

We are the ones who do know something. We are the ones who have his word. And who believe his word.

And therefore we know the truth. We know the gospel. The world doesn't.

And that makes us different. That sets us apart from the world. We are sanctified, literally means set apart for God.

And what sets us apart from the world is the truth. Jesus of course said in John 14.6, I am the truth. And possessing the truth and also he's the word.

He says your word is truth. We have Jesus. We have his words.

We have God's word. We have God's truth. This which we know, knowing God, knowing Christ, is what sets us apart from others in the world as a separate kind of people.

We're sanctified by that truth. As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world. He'll say more about that in chapter 20.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself. That they also may be sanctified by the truth. He says I've set myself apart, kept myself in a different category from the people in the world so that I could give them the truth and they could be sanctified too in it.

I do not pray for these alone. But also for those who will believe in me through their words. So not just these disciples, but through all the ones who will become disciples through their influence, which is all the rest of us.

And that they all may be one as you Father are in me and I in you. That they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And the glory which you gave me I have given them, that they may be one just as we are one.

I in them and you in me, that they may be made mature or perfect or complete in one. And that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them as you have

loved me. Now he says the same thing twice.

In verse 21 and in verse 23. In both cases he prays for the disciples to be one, which he had already done earlier in verse 11. So this is like something he brings up three times.

But in these two times, verse 21 and 23, he gives a reason. And it's the same reason in both verses. In verse 21, I ask that they be one.

Why? So that the world may believe that you sent me. And in verse 23, I pray that they'll be perfected in one. Why? So that the world may know that you sent me.

In other words, there is a phenomenon that God intends to be the convincing phenomenon to the world that Jesus is from God. Does the world know that the Father sent Jesus? Apparently they don't. They're not acting like it today.

Why not? Jesus said, I pray that they may be one so the world will know. I pray that they may be one so that the world may believe. The world does not know.

The world does not believe. And it may well be because, lo and behold, the church is not visibly one. Now we are one in the Spirit.

God sees us as one. Every Christian on the planet is part of one body as far as God is concerned. But that's not visible to the world.

Our oneness is not visible to the world and it needs to be. Or else how would that become a thing to convince the world? How will the world know that he's one by our unity or that he's God's Son by our unity if they can't see the unity? Christians need to behave as one. And the presence of denominations and so forth like that no doubt is one of the things that obscures the fact that there is unity in the Spirit between all Christians.

And we're supposed to keep that. It's supposed to be the strongest evangelistic weapon we have is our love for and unity with other brothers and sisters. All of them.

If there's anyone that God accepts that you don't accept, then we're failing in this. If there's anyone that God will fellowship with but you won't, then this is a failure on our part. And it is just the kind of thing that has kept the world from believing that Jesus is who he said he is.

If the Christians were one like they were in the book of Acts, in Acts chapter 2, this was a very convincing testimony to the world. And God added to the church daily those that were being saved. Verse 24, Father, I desire that they also whom you gave me may be with me where I am.

And that they may behold my glory which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you sent me. And I have declared to them your



name, and will declare it, that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Interestingly, he says in verse 24, I desire that they may be with me where I am. And yet, he's going out of the world and he says, I don't pray that you take them out of the world. I'm going out of the world, they are not going out of the world, but I hope that they'll be where I am anyway.

How can that possibly be? Well, of course, he had said back in chapter 14, I'm going to go and I'm going to send you another comforter of the spirit of truth. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. That is, in the person of the spirit.

He says, if I go away, I come again, that where I am, you may be. While you're here, and I'm there. Yet, we'll be in the same place.

Why? Because I'm with you always, even to the end of the age. By the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is everywhere we are. And we are where he is.

Even in heaven, because in Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 6, Paul says that God has raised us up and seated us in Christ, in heavenly places. So, that's where he is, that's where Jesus is, but we're in him. And in him, we are where he is.

And he is where we are. He's not praying that we will go to heaven and be where he is when he's in heaven. He's already prayed against that.

He's not asking you to take them out of the world. But I am praying that they'll be where I am. Spiritually, obviously.

In sharing the spirit and being part of his body, being attached to him as our head, being in him. We are always where he is and he is always where we are. And also, at the very end there in verse 26, he says, I've declared to them your name and will declare it.

I bring this up because there's a lot of Christians today who believe that we need to start using the right name when we talk about God. That we've been too flabby about this, we've been too careless. We have not been using the right pronunciation or the right word for God.

That we really need to call him Yeshua. Although some people think they can refine that a little better and it's Yahoshua or some other thing similar to that. Likewise, we need to call God Yahweh and some have a different idea of how that's pronounced too.

And it's very important to them that we pronounce it the way they pronounce it. Because after all, isn't that what it's all about? Jesus said, I've declared your name to them. Obviously, Jesus wants us to know God's name.

And if we're not knowing his name, see this is what the Jehovah's Witnesses say. We

need to call him Jehovah. Well, they're pronouncing it wrong too apparently.

But the point is, they say if you don't use God's name, then how is he going to know you're talking about him? JW's actually say that. If you don't pray to Jehovah by name, how is he going to know you're talking to him? I think he's smart. I don't think he's stupider than I am.

If I talk to you or you talk to me, I know you're talking to me even if you don't call me by name. I think God can tell when we're talking to him too. I don't think he's that dumb.

But I do believe that when Jesus has declared your name, he's not even talking about God's handle, God's label, or his personal name, Yahweh or Yeshua or any of those names. In scripture, the name means, of course, the identity and the character and all of that. We think of the word name much more narrowly.

We think of it only as the syllables by which we address a person. That's their name. The thing that's in the right lines on the birth certificate and on the passport and the driver's license, that's their name.

But actually, to the Hebrews, a person's name is everything about them. It's who they are. It's what they are.

It's what kind of person they are. It's their character. It's their identity.

It's their reputation. That's their name. The word name in the scriptures speaks of the full identity of the person.

Jesus said, I've declared your name. What he means is, I've declared to them who you are. If there's any title for God that Jesus declared, it's not Yahweh, it's Father.

Jesus said, when you pray, say, Our Father. He didn't say pray Jehovah. There's nothing wrong with using the name Jehovah or Yahweh or whatever pronunciation one prefers.

Or none of them at all. None of those names appear in the New Testament in the Greek. The Greek New Testament doesn't have the word Yahweh or Jehovah in it.

That's in the Old Testament Hebrew. But the writers of the New Testament didn't use it. They used other words for it in the Greek.

They changed the name Yahweh, when they translated it into Greek, into kurios, which just means Lord. And so, obviously it was not important to the New Testament writers to retain in their references to God, the divine name, untranslated and unmodified, because the verbal sound of the name is not what is meant. He said, I've declared your name.

He means, I've declared to them who you are, what kind of a God you are. That you're their father. That you love them.

That you sent me to die for them. That's what I've declared. Who you are.

And I want them to know who you are. Jesus came so that we would know the Father.  
That's what he said.

And that's what he's affirming in this particular place too.