

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG126 – You Have A Bodyguard

Hi, and welcome to this podcast. As you know, I have been bringing a few podcasts out of a concern that I have for people and their thoughts and feelings as we are facing some of the days ahead of us. We see difficult times, potentially, on the horizon, both in the Scriptures and as we look around ourselves in the natural world. And so I want to talk to you a little bit out of the Scriptures today, because I am trying to build faith and confidence and the joy in your heart as we look to these days that God has chosen and blessed us to be walking in.

Today I am going to start by reading to you out of John the seventeenth chapter. I want us to get the sense of the great protection that we have surrounding us, and the great blessing that we have through the Holy Spirit who is with us, as we go into the times that are ahead. John 17, as you know, was a prayer that the Lord voiced before the Crucifixion. I always put a lot of weight into these verses, personally, because I feel like you literally have the Lord talking to the Father here, and He is asking Him specific things. Now for me, I always believe that if Christ is asking the Father to do something, I feel like those prayers will be answered – the Father is going to answer the prayers of His Son. Therefore, I think we can put a tremendous amount of weight and confidence in these verses, that what is going to transpire is going to be according to what the Lord has asked.

So let's dive into it. John the seventeenth chapter, and I will begin reading at verses 10-13. This is Christ speaking to the Father directly, and the disciples are there listening to this conversation between Him and His Father: "All things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves." We recognize that out of hearing these Words, we are to receive and rest, in a sense, in the joy of the Lord that He has given, the glory that transpires in these verses.

Going on with verse 14, "I have given them Your word." We need to remember this, that Christ gave us the Word of God the Father. He has given us the Scriptures. And in these days, when He has ascended to the right hand of the Father and we no longer see Him, and He is no longer teaching us beside the shore of Galilee, or walking with us as He did with those disciples who were with Him, we have His Word. And that Word must in these days become of primary importance in our lives – that we read them, that we understand them, that we believe them, and that they are the strength, they are the commandments, they are the guideposts of how we live, how we walk, what we think and what we do. He has given us this Word. And sometimes, as you get into this age and you see things unfolding around you, and certainly if we are of those who walk into the Great Tribulation, we are going to see much going on around us. You say, "Boy, where do I find an anchor? Where do I find something to really hang onto? Where do I find my guidance?" You find it in the Word. He has given you His Word. "And the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." If you have problems in

your life, this could be one of the answers: we are not really of the world. We are a creation, a new creation in Christ, and we put on that new creation on a daily basis. Because of that, the world is going to have a problem with us.

Verse 15, “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.” This to me is a guiding light verse, because He is saying, “Look, I don't want You to remove them out of the situation. The world may hate them because they are not of this world, but I am not asking You to take them out of the world.” Now, those who believe in a pre-Tribulation rapture have to really read this, and take it, I think, in its context. Here Christ is asking the Father not to take us out of the world, but to leave us in the world as His testimony during the days in which we live our lives, just as He lived in the world and He was the testimony of the Father. He was the light of the world. He was the glory of God manifested in this world, to the world; and we, likewise. He said, “As the Father sent Me, so send I you.” He has sent us into the world. The Father did not remove Him when things got difficult; He left Him in the world to be the answer He was looking for. And I think we should really pray over this verse 15. This is Christ praying to the Father, asking the Father what He wants the Father to do: “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.” I love this, because Christ Himself is asking the Father now to be our bodyguard. He is asking the Father to care for us. We may find difficult times ahead; you may be in persecution that is surrounding you, or other types of tribulation in your life; but Christ asked the Father to keep you from the evil one. You have the Father surrounding you as a barrier, as a wall. He is the wall around you, and the fire in the midst of you. And I think that this needs to be very real to us in our lives as we walk on a daily basis.

What do we have for us today? I think a lot of times we look from where we stand and we see all the wonderful things that God did through the Scriptures in the past; we read the prophecies and the promises of what is to come, including the return of Christ and the establishment of His Kingdom; and it is easy to see the difficult days that we live in, and say, “But what do we have today? What do we do?” Is there anything for us, in a sense, that you could say it is almost the supernatural manifestation of God in the earth for us, as Christ had? We see that protection existed for Christ. They came to take Him and throw Him over the precipice, and it says, “He passed through their midst and He was gone.” We are not quite sure how that happened, but I would say it is just like this verse: the Father was protecting the Son, and He was covering Him, making sure that He was not killed or destroyed before His ability to go to the cross and be the Savior of the world. And I believe that if we have been sent by Christ into this world as God sent Him into the world, that Christ is now, in this verse, establishing for us a protection, so that we will be able to accomplish the will of the Father, accomplish the will of Christ in our lives, without being touched by that which would seek to destroy us.

As He said in the previous verse, “The world is going to hate them, because they are not of the world.” But He said, “I am asking You not to take them out of this world, but to keep them from the evil one, to keep them from the plot and the plan that satan may have.” If you are a son of God, you are walking with a target on your back. According to the Scriptures, if it would be possible, there would be no flesh saved alive, in the plan that satan has for the end days. But I'll tell you, his desires will never be manifest. And one of the reasons is this prayer of Christ to the Father, while He was still with us, saying, “Father, I am asking You to keep them. Don't let them be touched. Let them walk with You and fulfill the Word and the will that You have for them in this generation.”

Verses 16-19 say, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” What do we have to look forward to as we walk day to day? We have sanctification

by the Word of truth that He has given us. These Scriptures are going to have the power to bring us into the sanctification that Christ has won for us. "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask on behalf of these alone." Now this verse is very important, because many people doctrinally split this up and say, "Well, these verses are to the apostles. He is speaking to and about the apostles with the Father, and this does not apply to us. They were in another dispensation, and now miracles are gone, and all of these things do not really apply to us, they only applied to them." Okay, well, let's just go ahead and read verse 20: "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word." Okay, everybody raise your hand if you believe in Christ through the Word of the apostolic ministries, through the book of Acts, through the Gospels that we read. We do. We became believers. All of us living in this generation do not believe because of a personal appearance of the Messiah to us walking for three and a half years, like the disciples had. But, what we do have is the fact that we believe through their Word, and through the ministry that they had. Therefore, in verse 20, Christ is saying, "I am talking about you in 2022, 2023. I am talking to you guys in this generation. These Words and promises and provisions all relate to you. And one of those great provisions is the fact that I am asking the Father to keep you from the evil one." You have a bodyguard. You have One who is protecting you and keeping you in the name of Christ. And that is so wonderful, so blessed, and so important for us. So, He is speaking to us.

Verse 21, "That they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me." This verse is tremendously meaningful for me, personally; it is very real. It is part of this prayer of Christ speaking to the Father. And I believe that because He asked the Father, at some point we will see the body of Christ, the body of believers, come into a oneness. It does not seem possible right now, as we look around and behold the landscape of the church and different things that take place in the world. We even question the one new man of the oneness of the Jews and the Christians, and what is going to transpire through the prophecies of that. It all seems impossible. But I guarantee you, at some point it will take place, because this was Christ asking the Father for it. Not for our sake, for His name's sake – because He asked the Father, we will be one. And as we become one, what is going to happen? The world will believe that the Father sent Christ as Messiah into the world. There will be times of revival that the world has never seen. It is going to happen because we are one, and the world will believe that the Father sent Christ as Messiah.

Verse 22, "The glory which You given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one." This is another tremendously important verse, when we sit here and say, "Well, what do we have in this generation? I don't see that we have what we need to walk in these tremendous days of persecution or trouble in the world that we live in." He said, "The glory which You gave Me I have given to them." He has given it to us that we may be one, just as He and the Father are one. We have the glory of Christ resting upon us. And that glory is going to, in its power, work within us, individually and collectively, to manifest Christ in His many-membered body. Verse 23, "I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me." This is a promise of our perfection – not perfection after He returns, perfection now in this world, by virtue of this glory that He has put on us, by virtue of us becoming one as He and the Father are one. We are not going to just see the world believe because of that oneness; we are going to be perfected in that process of the oneness and becoming one. That will be part of the vehicle in this age, that we grow in God and find His will working in and through us as we move along in our

walk with God. And the world is going to know that God sent Christ, and that He loves us, even as He loved Him.

Verses 24-26, “Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.” Is this all just future tense of His return? I don't think so. I think there is a way in which we behold Him. I believe there is a way in which we are seated with Him in heavenly places. I believe there is a way, according to Matthew 6:6, that we enter into our closet with the Father in this day and age and find that our prayer is in His Presence. “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” Tremendous promises that we have in the things that God has given us! It is a time when we will walk through many things. But I believe that in the process of walking through them, we will have His protection and His immunity, because Christ asked the Father to keep us from the evil one. And so, we really believe that.

A couple of points as we end this podcast. Number one, as we enter troubled days, the Scripture must become an anchor to us, the Word that He has given us. Remember, He said, “I gave them My Word.” In that Word, we are going to find the answers we need, we are going to find the promises we have that we can walk in today. The Scriptures do not just point to things of the past that God did, or things of the future that will happen. They talk about today, and the promises and provisions that we in this generation have from God to walk in and become. He has given us His Holy Spirit, and we are able to walk by that Spirit, to learn and become, and to do His will.

Number two, we must learn to walk experientially in all that the Lord has provided for today. It can't just be some doctrinal concept. It can't be things that we are just reading in a book. Let the Word of God live for you! Let it live in you, and let it become your reality. The power of that Word should manifest in and through our lives as we walk with Him.

Lastly, I would say there are many promises and prophecies about the future; but we will not reach the future if we do not understand that the Lord has provided for us to live in this day, to walk in all of His will. As He was sent into the world, so He has sent us into this world. And because of that, we should come to Him and the Father and say, “As it is written of us, we have come to do Thy will, O God.”

I bless this Word to your heart. Let it encourage you, and let it be something that really drives us, both into His Word and into our prayer closets, our time of waiting on Him. There is much that we have. And if you feel overwhelmed, remember the prayer of Christ that asks the Father to keep you from the evil one. I bless you with that understanding. Amen.