

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on October 21, 2018:**

**"What does the Church (Believers) Do?
(John 17:13-26)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows that the commission of the church is to love God and love others by reaching out, being a support and a light to them.]

Notes

Introduction:

- This month we are going through the series – “What is the church?”
- The first week, we answered the question, “Why this church?”
- And last week, we discussed the word for church, “ecclesia” which means “called out assembly.”
- And, so today, we’re going to look into what the church, the assembly of believers, is called to do.

John 17:13-26:

- These are some of the last words that Jesus spoke to His disciples, who were the founding members of the church – our spiritual ancestors, so to speak.
- We could summarize these verses as: benefits of believers for sending those sent.
- Jesus was praying for specific benefits for His church, because we know that Jesus is the head of the body – the church.

- Jesus’ prayer to the Father highlighted 6 benefits or gifts given to the church:
 - Fullness of joy
 - Word
 - Protection from evil or the evil one
 - Sanctification
 - Glory
 - Love of Jesus in us

- Now we need to understand that these are not physical benefits or financial benefits.
- Rather, these are supernatural benefits.
- And these spiritual gifts don’t come to kings or royalty, or the wisest of philosophers, or the richest CEO in our country – unless, of course, they are believers and followers of Jesus.
- These supernatural gifts apply to those who have a loving relationship with Jesus.

- Because of our very busy lives, it’s good to be reminded of the fact that “our day to day” is NOT just about our daily routine, but rather we are called out to a different citizenship and into a different relationship.
- Jesus prayed that we wouldn’t be taken out of this world, but rather we remain in this world with a specific assignment to do.

Spiritual gifts given to the church:

- Fullness of joy –
 - This doesn't come from our bank account or our position at work, or the type of vehicle we drive – rather it comes from God.
 - If we want more joy, we lean into our calling, we lean into growing in our day-to-day flourishing relationship with Jesus and we lean into the fact that we are called to be sent.

- The gift of the word –
 - Now there is the Word with a capital “W”, which is Jesus.
 - And there is the word with a lower case “w” which is the Bible, the Scriptures.
 - Now, the fact that each of us can refer to Scripture on a daily basis, is a gift.
 - And so as we study Scripture on a daily basis, we take advantage of that gift.

 - It wasn't until Gutenberg's time that word of God was made so readily available to everyone.
 - So, the gift of the word brings us into close contact with the Father, Son and Spirit, who loves us more than we can ever know.

- Protection from the evil one –
 - We don't often think about the fact that there is an adversary out there.
 - Jesus prayed to the Father that we would have protection.
 - That's a spiritual resource that comes from the Father, Son and Spirit.

- Sanctification –
 - In these verses, Jesus said that He was sanctified for our benefit.
 - When Jesus came to this earth in human form, He lived out the same kind of life we do.
 - Now when Jesus was baptized, He received the Holy Spirit and He did that so that we could receive the Holy Spirit and be sanctified.

 - Everything that Jesus did through His Incarnation, now applies to us.
 - And we know that when we are lacking to do something, Jesus does it for us.
 - God doesn't expect us to be perfect, because His Son is perfect and takes that perfection on our behalf.

- Glory –
 - Now, the very glory of Jesus has been given to us, as believers.
 - But we don't wake up in the morning and immediately think, “I am full of the glory of Jesus.”
 - Yet, we have to believe this because we're told this from Scripture, even though our feelings might tell us something different.
 - We need to be challenged to believe that each one of us have the same glory that Jesus Christ has.

 - Now, we still haven't received our glorification that comes in the future – it's an already-not-yet dynamic – but from God's viewpoint, it's as good as done.
 - We have to change our thinking and accept that.

- It's one thing to believe that Jesus died for our sins and is our Lord and Savior, but we also need to accept and believe all of the fine details that goes with that.
- We also have been given God's joy and glory – that's the new life we live into.
- Love of Jesus in us
 - It's God's love in us that makes the difference.

John 17:13 (NASB), (Jesus speaking) 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.

- That statement about Jesus' joy made full in our lives should put a big smile on our faces.

14) I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

- This takes us back to last week, where we read the letter about Christians to Diognetus dated from 134 AD to the second century, which showed that while first century Christians lived in the world, they knew their citizenship was from somewhere else.
- Since our citizenship is in heaven, we are like Abraham – kind of nomads.
- And yet at the same time, we have a role to play and a work to do – loving God and loving others, reaching out, being a support and a light to others.
- Our world is comprised of two types of people – believers and not-yet-believers.
- Now the world as described here in this verse is a society organized without God as its center.
- But, the church is a society organized as Christ as its center.
- As a church, the body of Christ, we are sent to the world, who does have God as its center to help them believe in God.

**15) I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.
16) They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.**

- Jesus protects us so we can fulfill the role He has given us to accomplish.
- The reason all of these benefits are given is so that we will be successful in accomplishing what He has given us to do – to show others God's love.

17) Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

- Now the true truth, the ultimate truth is, of course, Jesus Christ.
- And we also have the written word, which is the Bible.
- The Greek word for “sanctification” means to “set apart, made holy for a specific purpose.”

18) As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

- Jesus doesn't ask to do anything that He Himself hadn't already done.
- And when we are sent to develop those relationships, we are carrying out the same purpose that our Savior had accomplished.

- When we go to others, Jesus is with us because this is His work – Jesus invites us to participate with Him.
- And when we go into the world, we experience those benefits in a magnified way.

19) For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

- We are sanctified at baptism as Jesus set the example by being baptized.

20) “I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;

- So Jesus is praying for not only the believers but also for the not-yet-believers.
- Jesus want us to have one unity just the triune God has unity.
- So, when we come together as a church, as a family, we are diverse, yet unified.
- And in the world, diversity usually doesn't lead to unity.
- But the hallmark of the church is that we are both diverse and yet unified.

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.

- In that unity and through the Incarnation, we are included in the very body of Jesus Christ and Jesus brings us to the Father through Himself.
- That oneness and love for each other of the Triune God has been given to us.
- And it's through that oneness and unity that the church reaches out to others.
- That is what “sent” means.

22) The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;

- The message of the Gospel is that we are one with the Father, Son and Spirit and that we have been reconciled and redeemed.
- But now it's up to us to listen to the word of the Holy Spirit, believe, experience, participate, and respond.
- When we do that, fullness of joy comes, Jesus' glory comes, understanding of the gift of the word comes.

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.

- That's why it's so important for the church to be unified.
- And when we're not unified, it sends the wrong message.
- But when we are in unity that comes out of our relationship of loving God and then loving others, that sends the right message that Jesus had intended all along.

24) 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.

- So that relationship of Father, Son and Spirit has existed before time and their plan was to include humanity in their relationship.
- When we are motivated by the Holy Spirit to move in that relationship, we have a choice either to act or sit back.
- We are encouraged to move forward.

25) “O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; 26) 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.”

- The fact that Father, Son and Spirit love each other so much from the beginning of time and that same love they have for each other is now extended to each one of us is so amazing. It doesn't get any better than that.
- Knowing this can change our perspective even on a down day.
- This tells us that there is no need to fear, because Scripture tells us that “Perfect love casts our fear” (1 John 4:18).
- And God is the very essence of love – that's who He is.
- So there is no fear in our God relationship.

What does the Church do?

- We're sent in unity to witness – witness in word for belief by not-yet-believers.
- We do that through loving God and then loving others without fear, shame, guilt or doubt.
- Now the word “witness” might be an awkward term for us.
- We need to get comfortable with that concept, because that's who we are.
- As a witness, all we're called upon is to share what we know and to share our experience with God.
- “My life was like this and then Jesus became my front and center and then things changed.”
- It doesn't take a doctorate in religion to share that. We all have our own unique experiences.
- So, whether it's over coffee or talking with someone who asks you a question.
- Pastor Craig doesn't feel the need to share the Gospel with someone unless he's in friendly relationship with someone, or someone asks him a personal question.
- The Holy Spirit typically works through relationships or people who are going through transitions in life who might ask some questions because they know we are a person of faith.
- It's the Holy Spirit's responsibility to bring to our attention those whom He is calling and then the Holy Spirit illuminates us in that conversation.
- Pastor Craig doesn't feel that we have a carte blanche to walk up to complete strangers and ask them about Jesus.

- So, we're here to love others and be an example and when given the opportunity to share the fact that this is not our love for people, but it's the love of God extended to everyone.
- That's how we are sent.
- This is an amazing life we've been called to.
- This is an amazing body we've been included in, because it's the body of Jesus Christ.

- That's who we are and because of that we've entered into a supernatural relationship that can change everything.
- And 10 years from now, we can look back and say, "Seeing and believing and then following the word and going with Jesus our friend and our Savior.
- That's who we are! That's what we do and will continue to do – and we'll do it together as a family.

Closing prayer