

# John 17:6-13

by St. John Chrysostom

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*St. John Chrysostom's sermon on John 17:6-13 emphasizes the revelation of God's name through Jesus, the unity of the Father and Son, and the importance of discipleship and mercy.*

**Scripture:** Daniel 4:27, Luke 11:41, John 17:6, John 17:9-13, 1 Corinthians 14:20

**Topics:** "Divine Love", "Faith In Christ"

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## Description

John Chrysostom preaches on the manifestation of God's Name to humanity through Jesus Christ, emphasizing the Father's love for the Son and the unity between them. He explains how believers are entrusted to the Son by the Father, highlighting the importance of faith in Jesus. Chrysostom delves into the significance of keeping God's word by believing in Christ and the disciples' understanding of Jesus' teachings. He reflects on Jesus' prayer for believers, expressing His desire for them to comprehend the depth of God's love. Chrysostom also discusses the fulfillment of Scripture through the Son's relationship with His disciples and the importance of seeking heavenly treasures over earthly possessions.

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## Transcript

I have manifested Your Name unto the men which You gave Me out of the world; Yours they were, and You gave them Me, and they have kept Your word.

1. 'Messenger' of great counsel Isaiah 9:6, Septuagint, the Son of God is called, because of the other things which He taught, and principally because He announced the Father to men, as also now He says, I have manifested Your Name unto the men. For after having said, I have finished Your work, He next explains it in detail, telling what sort of work. Now the Name indeed was well known. For Esaias said, You shall swear by the true God. Isaiah 65:16. But what I have often told you I tell you now, that though it was known, yet it was so only to Jews, and not to all of these: but now He speaks concerning the Gentiles. Nor does He declare this merely, but also that they knew Him as the Father. For it is not the same thing to learn that He is Creator, and that He has a Son. But He manifested His Name both by words and actions.

Whom You gave Me out of the world. As He says above, No man comes unto Me except it be given him John 6:65; and, Except My Father draw him John 6:64; so here too, Whom you gave Me. John 14:6 Now He calls Himself the Way; whence it is clear that He establishes two things by what is said here, that He is not opposed to the Father, and that it is the Father's will to entrust them to the Son.

Yours they were, and You gave them Me. Here He desires to teach that He is greatly loved by the Father. For that He needed not to receive them, is clear from this, He made them, He cares for them continually. How then did He receive them? This, as I said before, shows His unanimity with the Father. Now if a man choose to enquire into the matter in a human manner, and as the words are spoken, they will no longer belong to the Father. For if when the Father had them, the Son had them not, it is evident that when He gave them to the Son, He withdrew from His dominion over them. And again, there is a yet more unseemly conclusion; for they will be found to have been imperfect while they yet were with the Father, but to have become perfect when they came to the Son. But it is mockery even to speak thus. What then does He declare by this? That it has seemed good to the Father also that they should believe in the Son.

And they have kept Your word.

John 17:7

Now they have known that all things whatsoever You have given Me are of You.

How did they keep Your word? By believing in Me, and giving no heed to the Jews. For he that believes in Him, it says, 'has set to his seal that God is true.' John 3:33 Some read, Now I know that all things whatsoever You have given Me are of You. But this would have no reason; for how would the Son be ignorant of the things of the Father? No the words are spoken of the disciples. From the time, He says, that I told them these things, they have learned that all that You have given Me is from You; nothing is alien, nothing peculiar to Me, with You. (For whatever is peculiar, puts most things in the condition of being alien. They therefore have known that all things, whatsoever I teach, are Your doctrines and teachings. And whence have they learned it? From My words; for so have I taught them. And not only this have I taught them, but also that I came out from You. For this He was anxious to prove through all the Gospel.

John 17:9

I pray for them.

What sayest Thou? Do You teach the Father, as though He were ignorant? Do You speak to Him as to a man who knows not? What then means this distinction? Do you see that the prayer is for nothing else than that they may understand the love which He has towards them? For He who not only gives what He has of His own, but also calls on Another to do the same, shows greater love. What then is, I pray for them? Not for all the world, He says, but for them whom You have given Me. He continually puts the hast given, that they might learn that this seems good to the Father. Then, because He had said continually, they are Yours, and, You gave them unto Me, to remove any evil suspicion, and lest any one should think that His authority was recent, and that He had but now received them, what says He?

John 17:10

All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them.

Do you see the equality of honor? For lest on hearing, You have given them Me, you should deem that they were alienated from the authority of the Father, or before this from that of the Son, He removed both difficulties by speaking as He did. It was as though He said, Do not when you hear that 'You have given them to Me,' deem that they are alienated from the Father, for what is Mine is His; nor when you hear, 'Yours they were,' think that they were aliens from Me, for what is His is Mine. So that the, You have given, is said only for condescension; for what the Father has is the Son's, and what the Son has is the Father's.

But this cannot even be said of a son after the manner of man, but because They are upon a greater Equality of honor. For that what belongs to the less, belongs to the greater also, is clear to every one, but the reverse not so; but here He converts these terms, and the conversion declares Equality. And in another place, declaring this, He said, All things that the Father has are Mine, speaking of knowledge. And the hast given Me, and the like expressions, are to show that He did not come as an alien and draw them to Him, but received them as His own. Then He puts the cause and the proof, saying, And I am glorified in them, that is, either that I have power over them, or, that they shall glorify Me, believing in You and Me, and shall glorify Us alike. But if He is not glorified equally in them, what is the Father's is no longer His. For no one is glorified in those over whom he has no authority. Yet how is He glorified equally? All die for Him equally as for the Father; they preach Him as they do the Father; and as they say that all things are done in His Name, so also in the Name of the Son.

John 17:11

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world.

That is, Although I appear no longer in the flesh, yet by these am I glorified. But why does He say continuously, that, I am not in the world; and that, because I leave them I commit them to You; and that, when I was in the world I kept them? For if one should take these words in their simple sense, many absurdities will follow. For how could it be reasonable to say, that He is no longer in the world, and that when He departs He commits them to another? Since these are the words of a mere man parting from them forever. Do you see how He speaks for the most part like a man, and in a way adapted to their state of mind, because they thought that they had a greater degree of safety from His presence? Wherefore He says, While I was with them, I kept them. John 14:28 Yet He tells them, I come to you; and, I am with you till the end. Matthew 28:20 How then says He these words, as if about to be parted from them? He addresses Himself, as I said before, to their thoughts, that they may take breath a little when they hear Him speaking thus, and delivering them over to the care of the Father. For since, after hearing many exhortations from Him, they were not persuaded, He then holds converse with the Father, manifesting His affection for them. As though He had said, Since You call Me to Yourself, place these in safety; for I come to You. What sayest Thou? Are You not able to keep them? Yea, I am able. Wherefore then do You speak thus? That they may have My joy fulfilled John 17:13; that is, may not be confounded, as being imperfect. And by these words He showed that He had spoken all these things so, to give them rest and joy. For the saying appears to be contradictory. Now I am no longer in the world, and these are in the world. This was what they were suspecting. For a while therefore He condescends to them, because had He said, I keep them, they would not have so well believed; wherefore He says, Holy Father, keep them through Your own Name; that is, by your help.

John 17:12

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your Name.

Again He speaks as a man and as a Prophet, since nowhere does He appear to have done anything by the Name of God.

Those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

And in another place He says, Of all that You gave Me, I will surely lose nothing. John 6:39 Yet not only was he lost, but also many afterwards; how then says He, I will in nowise lose? For My part, I will not lose. So in another place, declaring the matter was more clearly, He said, I will in nowise cast out. John 6:37 Not through fault of Mine, not because I either instigate or abandon them; but if they start away of themselves, I draw them not by necessity.

John 17:13

But now I come to you.

Do you see that the discourse is composed rather in a human manner? So that should any wish from these words to lower the Son, he will lower the Father also. Observe, in proof of this, how from the beginning He speaks partly as though informing and explaining to Him, partly as enjoining. Informing, as when He says, I pray not for the world; enjoining, as, I have kept them until now, and none of them is lost; and, do Thou therefore now keep them, He says. And again, Yours they were, and You have given them unto Me and While I was in the world I kept them. But the solution of all is, that the words were addressed to their infirmity.

But after having said that none of them was lost but the son of perdition, He added, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. Of what Scripture does He speak? That which foretells many things concerning Him. Not that He perished on that account, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But we have before spoken at length on this point, that this is the peculiar manner of Scripture, which puts things which fall out in accordance with it, as though they were caused by it. And it is needful to enquire exactly into all, both the manner of the speaker, his argument, and the laws of Scripture, if at least we are minded not to draw wrong conclusions. For, Brethren, be not children in your minds. 1 Corinthians 14:20

3. This it is necessary to consider well, not only for the understanding the Scriptures, but also for earnestness in one's way of life. For so little children do not desire great things, but are wont to admire those which are worth nothing; they are pleased at seeing chariots, and horses, and the muleteer, and wheels, all made out of earthenware; but if they see a king sitting upon a chariot, and a pair of white mules, and great magnificence, they do not even turn their heads.

And they deck out as brides dolls made of the same material, but the actual brides, real and beautiful, they do not even notice; and this is their case in many other matters. Now this many men also undergo at this time; for when they hear of heavenly things, they do not even give heed to them, but toward all the things of clay they are as eager as children, and stupidly admire the wealth which is of earth, and honor the glory and luxury of the present life. Yet these are just as much toys as those; but the other are the causes of life, and glory, and repose.

But as children deprived of their playthings cry, and do not know how even to desire the realities, so also are many of those who seem to be men. Wherefore it says, Be not children in your minds. 1 Corinthians 14:20 Desirest thou riches, tell me, and do you not desire the wealth that lasts, but childish toys? If you should see a man admiring a leaden coin, and stooping to pick it up, you would pronounce his penury to be extreme; and do you, who collectest more worthless things than this, number yourself among the rich?

How can this consist with reason? We will call him rich who despises all present things. For no one, no one will choose to laugh at these little things, silver and gold, and other things of show, unless he have the desire of greater things; just as the man would not despise the leaden coin, unless he possessed coins of

gold. Do thou, therefore, when you see a man running by all worldly things, deem that he does so from no other motive than because he looks to a greater world.

So the husbandman despises a few grains of wheat, when he expects a larger harvest. But if, when the hope is uncertain, we despise things which are, much more ought we to do so in a case where the expectation is sure. Wherefore I pray and beseech you not to bring loss on yourselves, nor, keeping hold of mire, rob yourselves of the treasures which are above, bringing your vessel to port laden with straw and chaff. Let each say what he will concerning us, let him be angry at our continual admonitions, let him call us silly, tedious, tiresome, still we will not desist from exhorting you on these matters continually, and from continually repeating to you that of the Prophet, 'Break off your sins by almsgiving, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor' Daniel 4:27, and bind them upon your neck.

Do not act in this way today, and desist tomorrow. For even this body has need of daily food; and so too has the soul, or rather that much more; and if it give not, it becomes weaker and more vile. Let us then not neglect it when it is perishing, choking. Many wounds it receives each day, by being lustful, angry, slothful, reviling, revengeful, envious. It is therefore necessary to prepare also remedies for it, and no small remedy is that of almsgiving, which can be placed on every wound.

For, Give alms, it says, of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you. Luke 11:41 Alms, not covetousness, for that which proceeds from covetousness endures not, though thou give to those who need. For almsgiving is that which is free from all injustice, this makes all things clean. This is a thing better even than fasting, or lying on the ground; they may be more painful and laborious, but this more profitable. It enlightens the soul, makes it sleek, beautiful, and vigorous.

Not so does the fruit of the olive hold up the athletes, as this oil recovers the combatants of piety. Let us then anoint our hands, that we may lift them up well against our adversary. He that practices showing mercy to him that needs, will soon cease from covetousness, he who continues in giving to the poor, will soon cease from anger, and will never even be high-minded. For as the physician continually tending wounded persons is easily sobered, beholding human nature in the calamities of others; so we, if we enter upon the work of aiding the poor, shall easily become truly wise, and shall not admire riches, nor deem present things any great matter, but despise them all, and soaring aloft to heaven, shall easily obtain the eternal blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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