

Deepening our Relationship with God

Day 14

Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. John 17:11b

Key Thought: God keeps us in His NAME

A number of years ago our family was visiting my dad and mom in Maine. One day we went to a local lake, where I walked one of our children, a toddler at the time, out on to a dock. At the end, the water was at least 6 feet deep. So, the further out on the dock we walked, the tighter I held their hand. Not liking this much, my energetic and adventurous child began to pull hard against my hand, seeking their freedom. Not wanting to fish them out of the lake, I leaned down and picked them up, locking both of my arms securely around them.

I have to admit that when it comes to being a child of God, I have often been like my toddler, pulling hard against my Heavenly Father's hand in an attempt to go my own way. Praise God He never lets me go! That truth is displayed in this part of Jesus' prayer in John 17:11b. Jesus prays for the Father to keep us and hold us close.

This is the first actual request in His prayer. Up to now, Jesus has been expressing the reasons He is praying for us. Now, He begins to actually make requests on our behalf. It is truly a blessing that the first request is for us to be held securely by the Father.

When Jesus asks for the Father to 'keep' us, He is asking that God keep us secure in all aspects of our lives.

- Keep us secure in our salvation/relationship with Him
- Keep us from evil
- Keep us from being overwhelmed by sorrow or trials
- Keep us secure in the storms of life

Then Jesus asks that the Father Himself be the One who keeps us. "In your name" refers to everything God is. This includes all of His attributes like His holiness, love, grace, mercy, power and strength. This also refers to all of His names, like Shepherd, The Almighty, God my Strength, God my Refuge, God my Salvation and Yahweh, the One who makes and keeps promises.

The picture Jesus paints in this verse is of The Father holding us close to Himself, held securely in His arms. As Jesus makes this request, He says, "That they may be one." This is the first time the Lord prays for unity among His people. He will repeat this request three more times, in verses 21-23. This repetition reveals the importance Jesus places on us being united as His Body! In one way, each of us are held individually by God. In another way, we are being held together, joined by the presence of His arms securely around us, holding us close.

So, as Fully Devoted Followers of God, let's learn to rest in the Father's arms, and not try to pull away! Then, as His arms draw around to pull us secure and close, we will also be brought close to each other.

Questions to Ponder

1. Do you sometimes have doubts about your salvation? How does knowing God holds you close help you to rest in your relationship with God?
2. Take a moment to think how the various names of God relate to your daily life?
3. What attributes of God stand out to you? How do they offer security to you and your life?

Possible Prayer Points

1. Think about the challenges and needs you have in your life right now, and ask God to show you how He is holding you securely through them.
2. Pray for unity among the members of Grace Church.
3. Ask God to show you if there is anyone you need to forgive or reconcile with. Then ask for the grace to follow through.

How do you think you should relate with God as a result of Him trying to relate to you in this way?