

Sermon for June 18, 2026 – Confirmation Sunday

John 17:11b-19 (EHV)

Theme: **Jesus prays for you ...**

- 1) That you remain protected under His name
- 2) That you keep and confess His Word in this world

*Holy Father, protect them by your name, which you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. <sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I kept those you gave me safe in your name. I protected them and not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup>“But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so that they may be filled with my joy. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup>“Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>I sanctify myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

I don't think we fully realize just how hostile this world is to Christ and to His people. In some countries, like North Korea, parts of Congo, or Pakistan, believers risk prison and death just for confessing Jesus as their Saviour. They physically feel the world's hatred of Christ.

But we're safe in Canada, right? Maybe physically, but not spiritually. You feel the world's hostility every time a teacher makes a joke about Christianity, or a friend laughs at your faith. Scroll through social media, and you quickly find content that tempts you away from Christ, or mocks what you believe. Even more dangerous are the subtle influences you barely notice—the ideas that slowly pull your heart away from God without you realizing it.

Thankfully, there is Someone who takes the danger to your faith far more seriously than you do: Jesus. What does He do about it? **Jesus prays for you ...** 1) that you remain protected under His name, and 2) that you keep and confess His Word in this world.

Part One: That you remain protected under His name.

Our sermon text is part of a longer prayer Jesus spoke on the night before His crucifixion. In it, He prayed not only for His disciples who were with Him, but also for those who would come to faith through their witness of His Word. In other words, He prayed for you! Why? Because He knew how alone and threatened His followers would feel after His ascension, which is why He prayed:

*Holy Father, protect them by your name, which you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.*

Why does Jesus ask His Father to protect you by His name? Because God the Father has put that name on you by adopting you into His family.

Your faith in Jesus is not a conclusion you came to on your own. God revealed the truth to you in His Gospel, which the Holy Spirit used to create faith in your heart. In Baptism, He gave you a new birth—forgiving your sins, clothing you with Christ, and sealing you with the Holy Spirit.

Because of the Father's love, the Son's sacrifice, and the Spirit's work, the Bible says:

*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup>Indeed, as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.<sup>i</sup>*

At your baptism, God placed His name on you. You belong to Him. United with Christ by faith, you not only share an intimate union with Jesus, but also with the Father and the Holy Spirit! Your Triune God promises to be with you always – forgiving, protecting, providing, and blessing you as you remain connected to Him by faith.

*See the kind of love the Father has given you that you should be called a child of God, and that is what you are!<sup>ii</sup>*

Because this is true, Jesus prayed for His disciples.

*<sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I kept those you gave me safe in your name. I protected them and not one of them was destroyed, except the son of destruction, so that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

Jesus protected His disciples throughout His earthly ministry. Only Judas was lost. Despite being chosen and loved by the LORD, he traded in his name as God's child to become "the son of destruction." Why? Not because God wanted him to fall, but because he loved money more than Christ. Knowing in advance that Judas would repeatedly ignore Jesus' calls to repentance, God prophesied Judas' betrayal in Scripture as a sign that the Messiah had come, and as a warning for us all:

*<sup>15</sup>Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.<sup>iii</sup>*

But it's hard not to love the world when it's constantly tempting you to live for yourself and do whatever feels good. It says, "Don't worry about your faith. Use your time to live for yourself while you are young. You can always choose to come back to Christ later."

That's a dangerous lie. The longer someone drifts from Christ, the less they want to return. Some never do.

The world talks this way because it lives under the influence of the devil, who wants to destroy your faith. He hates you because the Lord loves you. Out of spite for God, he tries to drag you away from the One who saves.

Yes, William / Cora and Leah: Jesus knows all about the spiritual danger that surrounds you as God's child in this evil world. That is why He continues to ask His Father in Heaven to protect

you by His name.<sup>iv</sup> He calls you to find refuge in His Word and Sacraments – the only means by which God promises to unite you to Himself and guard your faith. Through the Gospel, the Holy Spirit inseparably joins you to God’s everlasting forgiveness, peace, and love<sup>v</sup> so you can continue to keep and confess His Word in this world.

## Part Two: That you keep and confess His Word in this world

Jesus prayed:

*<sup>14</sup>I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One.*

Jesus has baptized you, taught you, and confirmed you in His Word - and the world hates you for it. Why? Because nobody likes hearing that the things they enjoy are sinful. They want to believe that they are basically good, and that the sinful choices aren’t that serious. They want to think they’re fine without a Saviour, which is why your confession of God’s truth offends them.

Yet the same world that hates you is also the world that desperately needs you.

By giving you His Word, Jesus made you His ambassador. Through your confession of His truth — at home, at school, online, and with your friends — God is at work calling others to repentance and faith.

But the more you confess Christ in this world, the more you start to realize: “I don’t belong here. Heaven is my real home.” That realization can make you long for God to just take you away from this world, with all its trouble and temptation.

Whenever you are tempted to feel that way, understand that God has a purpose for you here. Christ did not save you merely to remove you from the world. He saved you so you could be His light of grace in it.

Jesus prayed:

*<sup>19</sup>I sanctify myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

To “sanctify” means “to make holy” or “to set apart for God.” Jesus set Himself apart for a very specific purpose: to carry your sins to the cross.

He allowed every wrong thought, word, and action of yours to be placed on Him. Why? So He could go to the cross to suffer the refining fire of God’s wrath on your behalf.

When the full price for sin was paid, Jesus cried out, “It is finished,”<sup>vi</sup> and committed His spirit into His Father’s hands.<sup>vii</sup> On the third day after His death, Jesus rose from the grave—holy, victorious, and alive forever.

He did this all for you – so that through faith in His Gospel, you would be washed clean of every sin and declared holy in God’s sight.

That’s why Jesus prays:

*<sup>17</sup>“Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth.*

God’s Law shows you your sin. It exposes the truth about your heart and your need for a Saviour. But only the Gospel—only the good news of what Christ has done for you in Word and Sacrament—can actually forgive and make you holy in God’s sight.

This is why the devil and the world work so hard to pull you away from God’s Word and Sacraments. They know these are the places where Christ comes to you with His forgiveness to strengthen your faith in Him.

But Jesus does not stop praying for you. He will not abandon you. He wants you to share fully in the perfection, peace, and everlasting life He won for you. And what He wants for you, He wants for all, which is why He prays:

*<sup>18</sup>As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world.*

Just as the Father sent His Son, so Jesus sends you—not to die for the world, but to live in the peace of His forgiveness, so that others may come to know the same saving love God has shown you in Christ.

The Bible is clear: God takes no pleasure in the death of anyone. He wants all people to repent and live.<sup>viii</sup> This is why He calls you to share the saving truth of His Son with the people He places in your life, so *that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*<sup>ix</sup>

William / Cora and Leah: As I said at the beginning of this sermon, I don’t think we fully appreciate just how hostile the world is to our faith. But your Saviour does. That’s why He continues to ask His Father to protect you under His saving name, so that you keep and confess His Word in this world.

That’s not only Jesus’ prayer for you, but it’s His prayer for all of us too. Therefore, may it also be our prayer for one another.

Brothers and sisters in Christ: don’t neglect God’s Word. Treasure and use His Sacraments. Why: Because these are the only means God has promised to use to keep you connected to Christ, safe in His grace, and ready to confess His saving love to a world that desperately needs it. Amen.

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<sup>i</sup> Galatians 3:26-27 EHV

<sup>ii</sup> 1 John 3:1 (EHV adapted)

<sup>iii</sup> 1 John 2:15 EHV

<sup>iv</sup> Cf. Romans 8:34

<sup>v</sup> Cf Romans 8:38-39

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vi Cf. John 19:34

vii Cf. Luke 23:46

viii Cf. Ezekiel 18:32, 33:11, & 1 Timothy 2:4

ix John 3:16 EHV