

*6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them.*

*11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.*

*17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

Twenty-one years ago today late in the afternoon Sue drove herself to the medical clinic in Hettinger, North Dakota. Shortly thereafter I was summoned to the hospital that adjoins the clinic. When I arrived I asked which room Sue was in. Before long we were together in the delivery room, celebrating the birth of our third child, Katie. On that day we knew nothing about her but the doctor's announcement – It's a girl! We gave her a name – I suppose most any name would have been fine back then. But now for us the name Katie brings to mind a face, a voice, a person. For us now, the name is filled up with her, with Katie. On that day 21 years ago the daughter that was born to us could have been most any sort of person for all we knew. But now she is Katie, not just any sort of person but that one person whom she is.

A woman speaks the word, god. We might go to the dictionary and read a definition just as we could have gotten a dictionary definition of the word the doctor spoke – girl. But to speak of a god is to speak a word that is not yet filled. A god might be most any sort of being – full of kindness, full of wrath, a trickster, kind, capricious, loving, hating, distant, nearby. When the doctor spoke of a girl that day he was describing her anatomy – his

description would fit every woman who was ever born. And to this day that is all he knows of Katie. But for Sue and me the girl who was born that day is a very special person, a person whom we love.

On the night Jesus was betrayed he prayed in the upper room. Within that prayer to his Father he spoke these words: “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world”.

I have made your name known.

For those who heard Jesus, who followed Jesus, who believed in Jesus, Jesus was filling up the word, god. No longer was it simply a god in whom people believed but this God whom Jesus trusted, and loved and obeyed, the God Jesus called Father.

Jesus said, “Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you and they have believed that you sent me.” Jesus was making God known - in his every word and deed Jesus was making God known. God was no longer a generic god, a “whatever you believe god to be god”, but for those who believed in Jesus God was the one Jesus called Father - the one who gave his Son - the one who sent Jesus to be the way and the truth and the life.

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world.”

When a phone solicitor calls our house and asks for Katie he has only a name. He does not know the person. One person is a good as the next to him; he only wants to make a sale.

Many people are calling upon God looking for something just like that phone solicitor. One wants healing, another a job, this one is looking for a god to keep her children safe, that one is looking for a god who will get him a passing grade on the next test. A troubled one begs for some peace of mind, a lonely one for a friend, the one ashamed of what he has done is looking for a god who will accept him. But for every one of them any god will do. It is kind of like a man soliciting a prostitute – who she is matters not at all – just what she will do for him.

I do not think it was different for many of those people who came to Jesus – they wanted healing, some food, forgiveness and when they received it they disappeared from the story. But a few wanted to know the God who had sent Jesus into their lives.

“I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world.” In Jesus they encountered God, came to know God.

You and I come here week after week seeking many things. I am not so different than anyone else seeking something from God. But in this community of faith Jesus is making God known to me, to you. God is no longer an idea, but a person – just as Katie has become a person to me over these past twenty-one years. Through Jesus God is revealed as the God who loves you so that he gave his Son for you. God is revealed as the God who sends you to the sick, and the hungry and to those in prison to be his kindness to them. In Jesus God is revealed as the God who will not let sin and death and evil own his children but will defeat every enemy that might try to claim those who belong to God. God raised Jesus from the dead, God will raise you.

In Jesus you know the one true God just as certainly as I know my daughter, Katie. Now that does not mean God cannot or will not surprise you any more than the last twenty-one years being a straightjacket restraining Katie’s tomorrows. But Katie is no longer possibly anything; she has become something – someone whom I know.

In Jesus God is known to you. The more you know Jesus the more you know God. And though God surprise you tomorrow, you can be sure that God will continue to love you in Jesus Christ, and forgive you in Jesus Christ and save you from sin and death and evil in Jesus Christ. And you can be sure that God sends you to bring Christ to others and others to Christ in all your words and all your deeds.