

# Nothing Negative

*"For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them.  
They knew with certainty that I came from you,  
and they believed that you sent me."*

*John 17:8 (NIV)*

**W**hen a gossip seeks to tell me some evil report about another Christian, I have a way of shutting them down that is usually very effective. When the opportunity comes for me to speak, I quickly say something very positive about the one being criticized. If the person is a friend of mine, I usually include that fact. The gossip soon gets the point and ceases the gossip, at least ceases the gossip to me.

As we read through John 17 it is striking how our Lord describes His people to the Father as He prays for them. What is clear is that every description is positive, and nothing is negative. There were many things negative concerning the disciples that night but as Jesus represented the disciples to the Father all comments were positive.

Perhaps today you are especially down on yourself and possibly even doubting your salvation because of some great sin or a life that appears to have not counted for much. Satan can make you an easy target if you spend much time trashing yourself.

Today take a few moments and read John 17 counting as many positive things as you can that

Jesus said about the disciples. Then consider which ones define your Christian life. Also pray to the Father and tell Him who you are as stated by Jesus that night so long ago. For example, in verse 8, the disciples were described as accepting Jesus' teaching. Assure your loving heavenly Father that you believe all that Jesus taught in the Gospels and you are seeking to follow Jesus' teaching. Continue this exercise until you find yourself more at ease in your Father's presence.

You have been loved with an everlasting love (Ephesians 1:3-6) and nothing that you have thought, said, or done can ever separate you from your gracious and merciful heavenly Father. He sees your efforts to live for Him and loves you for them. But His love rests on the firm foundation of His eternal purpose for you to be His beloved child through all eternity. Also keep in mind the request of Jesus v.24 "Father I want the ones You have given Me to be with Me...". You are as welcome to heaven as Jesus Himself and all because of the Lord's eternal purpose for you. You are part of the redeemed and Jesus has died and was raised from the dead for you. Take heart today as you read the following hymn written by A. Toplady:

A debtor to mercy alone,  
of covenant mercy I sing;  
nor fear,  
with your righteousness on,  
my person and off'ring to bring.  
The terrors of law and of God  
with me can have nothing to do;  
my Savior's obedience  
and blood  
hide all my transgressions  
from view.

The work  
which his goodness began,  
the arm of his strength will  
complete;  
his promise is yea and amen,  
and never was forfeited yet.  
Things future,  
nor things that are now,  
nor all things below or above,  
can make him  
his purpose forgo,  
or sever my soul from his love.

My name  
from the palms of his hands  
eternity will not erase;  
impressed on his heart  
it remains,  
in marks of indelible grace.  
Yes, I to the end shall endure,  
as sure as the earnest is giv'n;  
more happy,  
but not more secure,  
the glorified spirits in heav'n.

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