

J.R. Miller:

"Holy Father, keep through your own name, those whom you have given me" that they that they may be one, as we are." John 17:11

There is matchless tenderness in the picture which these words in our Lord's intercessory prayer suggest. We think of a dying mother about to leave her children behind her in this world, exposed to all the world's dangers. During her own life she has cared for them with all tenderness and fidelity. Now, however, she is dying, and can guard them no more. But she cannot leave them without securing for them shelter and protection. Looking up to God, therefore, she commends them to His care. She knows that He never goes away, that He is present everywhere, and that He will look after her motherless children.

In like manner, Jesus, about to go away and leave His disciples, commends them in their peril and need to His Father's care. The prayer suggests two things. It gives us a glimpse of the heart of our Savior and of His deep, tender, yearning love for His disciples. It ought to be a great comfort to us, to know that He has just the same love for us, if we are His. When we are going into any danger, He looks down upon us with deep affectionate longing, and intercedes for us as He did here for His disciples.

The other suggestion here, is that if we belong to Christ then we are divinely sheltered and kept. We cannot keep ourselves but we have the Lord for our keeper; the wings of the Almighty cover us wherever we go. I have slept in camps in war time, when hostile forces pressed close upon the lines; but we all lay down at night in quiet confidence and peace, without fear, because all around the camps sentinels walked and watched. So always, the Lord keeps those who trust in Him. To have Christ for Savior is to have the Divine protection and guardianship.