

God's Strategy to Reach the World

John 17:6-12

July 26, 2026

Jesus has poured Himself - His teaching and His life - into the disciples so that they would extend eternal life to the fallen world through the gospel.

What Jesus Did

I came and manifested Your name to the people whom You gave Me. v. 6

“I have revealed Your NAME” - meaning the character of God.

How can Jesus describe the disciples as those who “kept Your word”?

The unity of the Father and the Son. see v. 7

I gave them Your words, teaching, and truth. v. 8.

The Word of God, His revelation, is changing things!

Jesus speaks the very *words* of God.

I am praying for them. v. 9

Why does Jesus pray for the disciples? Why does Jesus not pray for the world?

He prays for His disciples that they might reach the world. See v. 21, 23.

I kept and guarded them. v. 12

How does the Father protect the disciples?

How the Disciples Responded

They “have kept Your word.” v. 6

They know the Father through the Son. v. 7

They know the truth through the mission of the Son. v. 8.

They glorify the Son. v. 10

We are Christians - we bear the name of the Son of God.

What Jesus Asks v. 11

What does Holy Father mean?

Keep them in Your name.

What is the unity of the Church?

The Warning v. 12

Why is Judas described as the son of destruction?

What is the warning?

Why is God's sovereignty so heavily emphasized in this prayer?

Here are some things to think about:

Meditation

Why do we need an election?

Because we will never be saved unless God chooses to save us. Election leads to the saving action of God in His lordship, and if we were left to ourselves we would never respond to God on our own at all. This is what people don't seem to appreciate, that all of us by nature are anti-God in our deepest instincts (see Romans chapter 3). We don't always realize this because many of us think we are seeking God, and frankly, people want a God they can manage and manipulate and have as a safety net. Those are facts about human life, and very familiar facts. But when it is a matter of responding to the real God and responding in a way that He calls for –that is by humbling ourselves before Him, learning to trust His word absolutely, turning from sin, taking our hands off of the reins of our own life and letting Him be in control –we wake up to the fact that we don't like this at all and we shy back from it. That is our nature. So you see, God has to take action otherwise we shall never come to Him at all because that is the state in which fallen humans find themselves.

Doesn't this detract from our responsibility to respond to the gospel? If I'm one of the elect, God will save me, and if I'm not I cannot be saved anyway so why worry about it?

No, that isn't the way to look at it because God has made us folk who act of their own will and He keeps us that way. And so He takes account of us for the things that we have done because they really were our own actions. The fact that we haven't got it in us to respond to God in a positive way doesn't mean that we don't choose not to respond to God. We do choose not to respond to God, and it's for that choice that we're responsible before Him. The truth about us is that we are like drowning folk who can't swim and left to ourselves would just go under and eventually not come up again. God takes action, as it were, to dive in, swim to us, grab hold of us and save us. Election, as we said a moment ago, is His decision to do that, and in His lordship and power He does it, and so our salvation is entirely due to Him. But all the time we are responsible for being the people that we are, drowning in our own moral mess.

JI Packer