

“Chosen and Protected” Growth Group Leader Notes
John 17:9-12

The sermon was divided into two parts: God chose us because He wanted to and God protects us by His power. Jesus references to the Father “those you have given me” (17:9) Here he is referring to the elect being chosen by God before the foundation of the world (see Ephesians 1:4, 11). The sermon focused on God’s choosing being a free act of love on God’s part. Nothing obligated Him to do it other than His own delight in doing so. We are not worthy of God’s including us in His family. What’s more is the cost of choosing us with the death of His Son, which is also what Jesus is referring to when He says “those you have given *me*.” In the receiving of the elect, Jesus was agreeing to pay for their place through His death.

Some of the questions attempt to draw out our tendency to compare ourselves to one another, and to see ourselves as better. There is a common narrative in the world that we need to be “on the right side of history.” But the Bible gives a much more complex picture. We are all on the wrong side of history, and only Jesus was on the right side. Yet He gave His life for the ones who are on the wrong side of history. God’s grace in both choosing us and giving His life for us should change the way we see God, ourselves, and others.

One thing that wasn’t addressed in the sermon that would be good to clarify is the way we are included in God’s family is by faith in what Jesus has done. God has chosen us, but it by faith that this is made into a full reality. We don’t receive God’s love by doing good works, but by believing in the work Jesus has done. The way we can know whether or not we are chosen by God is whether we trust in Jesus.

The second part of the sermon was about God’s protection. Jesus, asks His Father to guard the disciples (John 17:11). God’s name cannot be separated from his character, which is why Jesus invokes the power that His name has. Jesus, in love for His followers, is asking His Father to continue to preserve them. As the One who is the revelation of God (see John 1:12 and 14:9), Jesus bears the same name that God has (17:11,12). The sermon contrasts this with our tendency to live life on our own. We don’t have to fear being alone, or being vulnerable. We have the divine protection and preservation of God given to us through Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit.