

Chosen by God – The Ancient Excellence of 'Grace Alone' (Various Scriptures)

Recap:

- Having a common spiritual inheritance – a sinful nature – we were born radically corrupted in every facet of our humanity. Natural man is spiritually blind, enslaved and dead, having neither the will nor the ability to seek God; and facing certain eternal doom.
- Conclusion? Humanity has a catastrophic need of grace.
- God's saving plan of redemption is being worked out in history – hence the cross & resurrection of Jesus Christ – and spiritually dead people are coming alive every day.
- Question:
 - Who then will be saved?
 - How do people believe if they are not naturally able?
 - How can God's plan be effective if "none seeks after God, no not one" (Rom 3)
- Answer: In a loving act before creation "God chose some people to be saved, not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of His sovereign good pleasure" (Grudem) (c.f. Eph 1:3-6)

The Language of God's Choosing – "The Chosen People"

- The Bible frequently speaks of God's people as being "chosen" or "elected"
 - Psalm 33:12 / Psalm 65:4
 - Israel, in Deuteronomy 7:6-8
 - A sovereign and independent choice by God to establish and love one nation, while leaving every other nation back then...in spiritual darkness.
 - Abraham, in Joshua 24:2-3 / Nehemiah 9:7
 - Christians, in Matthew 24:22,24,31 / Luke 18:7 / Colossians 3:12 / 1 Thess. 5:9 / Titus 1:1
 - Angels, in 1 Timothy 5:21
 - (see also Rev 13:7-8, speaking of the Lamb's book of life in which names were written "before the foundation of the world")

The Basis of God's Election – Sovereign Pleasure, not 'Free Will'

- On what basis does God choose to save?
- Not a foreseen faith (for faith is His gift to His chosen).
 - Acts 13:48 – "Cause and Effect"
 - Justified through a faith He gave us – 2 Peter 1:1 / Acts 3:16 / Eph 2:8-9 / 2 Timothy 2:12 / Phil 1:29 / Acts 16:14 / 1 Peter 1:1-2
- Not human will or exertion, but on God who has mercy.
 - Romans 9:10-15
 - Not my free will to choose God, but God's free exercise of grace.
 - 1 Peter 2:8-9 / Romans 11:5-7
- Objection: "But why doesn't God save everyone? It's not fair!"
 - "Fair" would be to save none at all, for all are sinful/wicked.
 - (we will return to this in the future)
 - Your salvation was not by 'cosmic accident', but by 'His design'.

An Ancient Purposeful Decision – “The Love that Drives Election”

- It was a loving act of God that made you a Christian.
 - Ephesians 1:3-6
- Our response ought to be “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - C.f. Luke 10:21-22
- Election ought to produce diligence, not complacency
 - 2 Peter 1:10 – “Make your calling and election sure”
- Election ought to produce anticipation, not antipathy or apathy
 - 2 Timothy 2:20 (Acts 13:48 etc)
- Who are the elect?
 - Not our business. Our business is to persuasively make Christ known.
- Am I one of the elect?
 - “Repent and believe the good news, and you shall be saved”
- Why go spread the gospel at all? Why not leave God to do it all?
 - Firstly, God has commissioned us to go. Secondly, because the gospel is the means by which God is gathering His sheep.

The Gift of the Father to the Son – “My Sheep”

- Out of the great multitude of unwilling rebels, God has chosen some for eternal life.
 - John 17:1-2ff (Two gifts of the Father to the Son)
 - John 6:36,-37, 40ff
 - Matthew 22:14 - “Many are called, but few are chosen”
 - John 8:47
 - John 10:25-27
- Election is the basis for our assurance of salvation
 - John 10:25-30
 - If God chose you before the foundation of the world, how then could He ever “unchoose” you?
- So great was His love....that God did not wait for your permission to save you.

Conclusion?

- 'Grace Alone' saved you – a loving choice according to God's sovereign pleasure.
- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- 2 Timothy 1:9 – "God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of His own purpose and grace, which He gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began."
- Chosen by God...the Ancient Excellence of 'Grace Alone'